

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Fujio Matsuda was born in 1924 in Kaka'ako, Honolulu where he spent his childhood. He graduated from McKinley High School and was attending the University of Hawai'i when World War II began. Matsuda volunteered for the U.S. Army and served from 1943-45. He then returned to UH, completed his baccalaureate degree in 1949 at Rose Polytechnic Institute (now Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology), and received his doctorate in civil engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1952.

He continued his research and teaching at MIT and the University of Illinois before returning to UH to serve as professor, director of the Engineering Experiment Station, and chairman of the Department of Civil Engineering.

Between 1963 and 1973, Matsuda served as director of the Hawai'i State Department of Transportation under Governor John A. Burns.

He returned to UH in 1973 and became vice president for business affairs. In 1974, after a national search, he was named the university's ninth president.

Since leaving the presidency in 1984, Matsuda has been active in many corporate, community and professional organizations, including the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i and the Japan-America Institute of Management Science. He most recently served as chairman and CEO of the Pacific International Center for High Technology Research.

He and his wife, Amy Saiki Matsuda, have six children and eleven grandchildren.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

May 24, 1996

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project. Today is May 24, 1996 and we're at his office at the Japan-America Institute of Management Science in Honolulu, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto.

MK: I think what we'll do is that we'll start off this interview with very basic information. We'll start off with biographical information about yourself and we'll ask you to remember whatever you can about your parents' generation or grandparents' generation, but we also realize that some things won't be in your memory because you were just too young to know. So, you know, just answer as well as you can, but don't worry about it.

FM: Okay.

MK: So first of all, when and where were you born?

FM: I was born on October 18, 1924 in an area called the Magoon Block in Kaka'ako. I have no recollection (chuckles) of Magoon Block but that's where I am told I was born, at home, not in a hospital, and lived there for—I don't know how long—but not too long, I think. My earliest recollection, things that I remember, is of a home on Kō'ula Street.

MK: And what was the cross street?

FM: It was Pohukaina [Street] on the *mauka* side. The street just below that on the other side, on the *makai* side, I don't recall that name. It was across from the Nishimuras and the Yoshimuras who were friends of ours, family friends. They had sons that were about my age and we went through (school) together. And that's my earliest recollection of being a person. (Chuckles)

WN: You said that you, well, you don't remember the move from Magoon Block to Kō'ula Street [in circa 1926].

FM: Yes, I don't recall.

WN: What did your parents tell you about what they were doing at that time?

- FM: As I recall, the reason they moved from Magoon Block, where they had a restaurant, was that (their) business failed. And so they had to sell the place and move to the Kō'ula Street address. My mother [Shimo Iwasaki Matsuda] started working at the [Hawaiian] Tuna Packers, [Ltd.] in Kewalo Basin which is fairly close, (within) walking distance. And my father [Yoshio Matsuda], about that time, I think, started working for a service station as a body-and-fender mechanic. He was ambidextrous so he could use both hands to pound out the dents and, you know, smooth it out. Apparently, he was very good at it.
- MK: Based on what you've been told, what do you know about your mom's family and what she did before all that?
- FM: My sisters probably have a much better idea, but as I remember it, when she came over from Japan, she worked for a small store in Honouliuli, out toward 'Ewa. I'm not clear about the circumstances of my parents' marriage. My father was called to Hawai'i by his father who was already in Hawai'i on the island of Kaua'i. So he came over as a teenager, and my mother, although they're from the same *ken*, had arrived here separately. And then somehow they were introduced or a marriage was arranged and they got married.
- MK: You know, on Kaua'i, what kind of work did your grandfather and father do?
- FM: My grandfather worked in the cane fields. It must have been the Gay and Robinson plantation. My father said that he worked for the Robinson family but not in the cane fields. I'm not sure exactly what he did, probably a handyman. He left Kaua'i although my grandfather stayed on Kaua'i and died on Kaua'i. My father left Kaua'i and came to Honolulu. Apparently, he was fired (laughs) because he had gotten involved in some labor movement on Kaua'i and lost his job or quit, I'm not sure which, then came out to Honolulu. I think when he first came to Honolulu, he worked as a newspaper reporter for the *Nippu Jiji*, which is now defunct. Local Japanese[-language] newspaper.
- MK: You know, having worked as a newspaper reporter for the *Nippu Jiji*, what kind of education do you think your father had?
- FM: I think he had probably middle-school education, which was pretty good for, you know, that era and in the (part of Japan) where he came from. For us, you know, for the kids, we thought he was well educated because he was active in the Kaka'ako Japanese[-language] School. He also was involved in a Japanese poetry club, and he played *go* and things like that, so, I guess he had some education before he came to Hawai'i. As I said, he was brought over by his father, and he was already in (his) teens so, I think he was going to school (in Japan). And when he finished maybe middle school, he was brought to Hawai'i, but that's sort of conjecture on my part.
- MK: Were you ever told stories as to why your father was brought over?
- FM: No. I just assume that it was natural since his father and mother were here—I'm sorry not the mother. [His] mother was back in Japan, but his father was here so (he was called) over. His father died on Kaua'i and his mother died in Japan.
- MK: And then on your mother's side of the family, what have you heard about their background and her circumstances?

- FM: My mother's side is a little confusing. (I recently learned that she was married in Japan, but lost her husband to some illness. Her married name was Iwasaki. She was from Yamaguchi Prefecture,) Ōshima-gun, and Sare is the fishing village that she grew up in. (Many) people in Kaka'ako (were) from that area of Japan. So I think she may have come with a group of immigrants. But anyway, her direct family, brothers and sisters, parents, et cetera, as far as I know, (remained) in Japan. When we visited her home in Sare, it was very confusing because some of her relatives were named—I think, in fact, most of her relatives were named Yamane. (Laughs) (We didn't know at that time about her first marriage.)
- MK: You know, the area that your mom comes from, Ōshima, is well known as an area that was poverty stricken and lot of fisherman families.
- FM: Yes.
- MK: How about your mother's family?
- FM: Well, I guess her family was relatively well-off because they apparently owned a rice [dealership], they called it *kome-ya*. They would buy and sell rice, and they also owned some orange groves. So I think the family itself was probably relatively well-off, but individual members of the family, I guess, still struggled. Especially if you have a lot of kids, the (oldest) would inherit (the business) and the younger ones have to (chuckles) go find their own place in the sun. So as far as I know, on my mother's side, they didn't come from a fishermen-type background; they were more merchants (and farmers).
- MK: And you know, looking back, in terms of her . . .
- FM: Incidentally, my mother, I don't know whether it was that background or not, but I thought she was a pretty good businesswoman. My father was more the intellectual type, I guess. (Laughs) I'm sorry, I interrupted you.
- MK: I was just wondering in terms of her educational background, what type of education did you think she received?
- FM: Oh, her education was a lot less. I think elementary school at best. Her handwriting, for example, was not polished. My father had a beautiful hand, but my mother didn't. And I guess, in that (era), I'm not sure what the universal education requirement was in Japan, but I would say at best, elementary school.
- MK: And when you were growing up, how was their English?
- FM: Mine?
- MK: Their English.
- FM: Oh, their English. Oh.
- MK: Your mom and dad's English.
- FM: Well, both of their English was very bad. They never really learned. . . . My mother's English

was better than my father's. In fact, my father very seldom used English. About the only time he would really loosen up and use English was when he was feeling good, after he's had a few drinks, then he would start using English. But, you know, pidgin English and very creative (chuckles) pidgin English at that. We used to enjoy that.

(Laughter)

FM: My mother, doing the business end of it, say, in the store, in restaurant, saimin stand, et cetera, she could—and she was not as shy as my father about talking to non-Japanese. So with her broken English, pidgin English, she would talk to non-Japanese people. And during the war [World War II], when we had the saimin stand, remember I told you there was a sake brewery up the street that had been taken over by some army quartermaster unit. They used to, I guess, store things and stuff there, and they would come down to eat saimin and she would talk to them. Many of them became good friends with my mother and my sisters. She (was a) very friendly type anyway, but she said she had to be good to these soldiers because she wanted, wherever I was, (for) the people there (to) be good to me. So anyway, her English was not good, but she used it.

MK: You were born and raised in Kaka'ako, and your memory of Magoon Block is not too vivid, but of the Cooke Street, Pohukaina area, you said, more vivid. What do you remember most about that area that you grew up in?

FM: Nothing specific. As I said, the Nishimuras and Yoshimuras were good family friends and the kids were also friends, so even after we moved to the Cooke Street address I used to go play there. So the memory is sort of mixed. I have a vague recollection of a barbershop, Shishido, I think was the name, and we used to live behind them or up on the second floor or something. But that's about all I remember from that phase. So we probably didn't live there very long, it was just temporary between Magoon Block and the saimin business.

MK: When people think about Kaka'ako nowadays, they think of it as a real industrial area. Back in your days when you were a boy there, how would you have described Kaka'ako to other people?

FM: Well, Kaka'ako (was) like a village. Mostly Japanese, many involved in the fishing industry, boat building or fishing or working. . . . Many of the women working in the Hawaiian Tuna Packers, [Ltd.]. There were a few non-Japanese, Hawaiians, Portuguese. The Chinese bakery was, as far as I know, the only Chinese family in that area. Our next-door neighbor, when we were living (on Cooke Street), was a *Haole*. And that was very unusual. Nice family. But all around them, basically Japanese and Hawaiians. So when we went to school, Pohukaina School, the student body there were primarily Japanese, Hawaiians, oh, and Portuguese, too.

WN: How would you compare---I know as a boy you probably couldn't get around Honolulu too much, but how would you compare Kaka'ako with other sections of Honolulu at that time in terms of socioeconomic status?

FM: Well, it was clearly a low-income area. Everybody was struggling. I'm not sure that we were any poorer than [those in] other areas. But we must have been. I would say that if you compare it with places like, oh say, McCully, Mō'ili'ili, I guess those probably would be considered at our time, middle class, and Kaka'ako would be the low-rent district. You know,

the laboring-type families. We had a fair number of small shops, you know, candy store, *crack seed* store, barbershop, taxi, service station, things like that. There was a (Japanese) bookstore, Hakubundo [Book Co., Ltd.] where I spent a lot of my time. And of course, there was a (movie) theater, and then the grocery stores: the Yamane Store and the Fujieki Store. And so economically, I thought it had a good mix. That's why I think of it as a village. For a young person like me growing up, I didn't have to go out of Kaka'ako to do anything. Go to a movie, or go to school, go to the library. The farthest I would go was really to school when I went to Washington Intermediate [School] or to the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association], the Nu'uano Y. That was my world.

MK: As a child, you in Kaka'ako, Japanese, predominantly Japanese you said, some Portuguese and Hawaiian, what kind of activities did you see your mom and dad and family participating in, in that community?

FM: Well, of course, most of it was the saimin stand, the part that I remember. And the other part was basically Japanese[-language]-school related. My father was fairly active in the school, you know PTA [Parent-Teacher Association]-type activity. Oh, and then there was, what, Kaka'ako *Chihō-jin Kai*, and I guess we had annual events. But it was basically a Japanese community focus. I don't remember very much, doing things, say, with the Kaka'ako community as a whole where the other races would come in. So it was basically an immigrant Japanese society that we lived in.

When we went to movies in the early days, they used to have these traveling (Japanese) movies with the *benshi*. And they would have the shows in the courtyard of the Konpira Jinja [Shinto temple] in Kaka'ako. So whenever there was a movie, all the Japanese would get together, you know, stake out their place with the *goza* (chuckles) and (*zabutons*). And, you know, somebody would go early to get a good place, and then we'd enjoy an evening of mostly samurai movies. That used to be a lot of fun. And then, of course, on New Year's Day everybody would get dressed up and go to *ōmiya-mairi*. So everything revolved around Japanese culture.

MK: You mentioned earlier, the Kaka'ako *Chihō-jin Kai*.

FM: Uh huh.

MK: What kinds of activities did they sponsor?

FM: Oh, once a year they would have parties, picnics. You know, that group still meets, the Kaka'ako *Chihō-jin Kai*. (Chuckles) We just had a *shinnen enkai* at Natsunoya [Tea House]. I recall, when I came back from the Mainland, going to one of those at Ala Moana Park. It was still a fairly sizable group, although now it's really dwindled to a very small group. But they had kids running around playing all kinds of games and, you know, they'd have all kinds of prizes. And the prizes (were) the typical Japanese-type prize, you know, bag of rice (chuckles), bottle of *shōyu*, a sack of sugar, things like that. And toilet paper. (Chuckles)

WN: Tablets and pencils.

FM: Oh yes, yes. (WN chuckles.) So it was a lot of fun.

MK: That Kaka'ako *Chihō-jin Kai*, besides doing social activities, did they do any activities that would help out a family, say, in times of need?

FM: Well, they had what they called a *tanomoshi*, but that was in smaller groups. You know, maybe a dozen families would get together. And I didn't fully understand what was going on. My mother used to belong to it and that's the way they got by. You know, I think every month they would get together and put in one dollar or whatever. And whoever needed the money at that time would bid, and the person who'd bid the (most) would get that pot. But that was not part of the Kaka'ako *Chihō-jin Kai*, it's more among friends. Kaka'ako *Chihō-jin Kai*, I guess, got involved as an organization, especially when somebody died. You know, everybody was poor and everybody struggled, so when you needed help, I guess they did something. But I'm not aware of any of that.

WN: Was it religious based at all?

FM: No. Purely social.

MK: You know, you mentioned staking out an area in the Konpira Jinja area. Were you folks active in the Konpira Jinja community?

FM: No. We'd go there for New Year's. And then when they had the movies we'd go, but otherwise, no.

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

MK: I think we had just been talking about the Konpira Jinja grounds, and it just occurred to me, what temple did your family belong to, if any?

FM: My mother on her side was *Jōdo-shū*. So we used to go to the *Jōdo-shū* [temple] for certain occasions. And on my father's side is *Nishi Hongwanji*. So as a family we say *Nishi Hongwanji* is our (temple). My mother was very devout. Because I was born on the eighteenth of October, and that day has some special significance with *Kannon-sama*, she would always go to Kannon Jinja in Pālolo. And she would take the bus and go out there to pray for her only son. My father was not religious at all, I would say. But as I say, my mother was. And it didn't bother her at all (whom) she prayed to. During the war [World War II], at night they were restricted, they couldn't go anyplace. But she would---next to or close to the Konpira Jinja, there was a Christian church. She couldn't go to *Jōdo-shū* or *Hongwanji* or certainly *Kannon-sama*, so she'd go to the Christian church to pray. I guess she figured that somebody upstairs knows so it doesn't matter. But she was very devout. And whenever she had time during the day when it was okay to go, she would go to places like the Pālolo *Kannon-sama*. So she was well known by people in these different temples and places.

MK: And we were just commenting on the Japanese-ness of the community that you grew up in. I know that you mentioned that there were some Portuguese and some Hawaiians. How much contact did you, as a child, have with non-Japanese?

FM: In the classroom, of course, but at the playgrounds or other social activities, almost exclusively Japanese. We had friends, as I said, classmates, but that was only while you were in school, you know. After school was over, you didn't stick around and play in the playgrounds. We

went to Japanese[-language] school. And there we had some time to play, and in that case we just—Japanese. So recess, classroom, that's about the only time we had a chance to really do things with the non-Japanese. And the Japanese[-language] school also put on—see, we also had to go to school on Saturday, and I used to do *kendō*, which was a Saturday activity. Then we would have, oh, different plays, Japanese plays that we, you know, (chuckles) we had no choice, we had to participate in.

(Laughter)

FM: So (*kendō*) practice and all those social activities were built around Japanese culture and Japanese activity. The only thing that I remember at Pohukaina School, other than being in the classroom, when I was, I think the last year, sixth grade—we had something like a *ho'olaule'a* on campus where they had a king and a queen and Hawaiian songs and the kids performed hula. And I'm sure we had May Day programs and things like that. But there was not much community life revolving around Pohukaina School as around Kaka'ako Japanese[-language] School.

MK: I know that you mentioned earlier that your dad and mom were basically Japanese speakers but your mom was little bit better with pidgin English and some English. How much contact did your parents have with non-Japanese?

FM: My mother, quite a bit, because non-Japanese would come to eat saimin. My father, I think, very little. When we had the saimin business he was in the back, you know, he was making the noodles, my mother was cooking and selling (in the front). So he had very little contact there. When he was an auto mechanic, I'm sure he must have had some contact, but primarily with the owner of the (repair shop) who was a Chinese man. And I guess they would converse in pidgin English at that point. But he was not very comfortable with non-Japanese. Especially the non-Asians. So I think perhaps with the Chinese he was a little more at ease.

MK: I think you mentioned that at one point in your mother's life she worked as a maid for a *Haole* family.

FM: Right, up in Nu'uaniu, one of these rich, old *kama'āina* families.

MK: Did she share any experiences from that time with you?

FM: Uh, (pause) I just sort of vaguely remember her doing it. It was a day job, so she would go during the day to. . . . She wasn't a live-in maid, she would go and clean up the house, (do laundry), and things like that. (It) wasn't a full-time job because at the same time she was also doing the [Hawaiian] Tuna Packers, [Ltd.] job.

MK: What do you recall about the [Hawaiian] Tuna Packers, [Ltd.] that was in Kaka'ako?

FM: Yeah, right. (Chuckles) It smelled.

(Laughter)

FM: I got used to it, but you know when the tuna packers are cooking tuna and packing it. And, of course, when my mother came home she'd smell. But it wasn't unpleasant or anything. I like

tuna.

(Laughter)

WN: Did she tell you what she did in the [Hawaiian] Tuna Packers, [Ltd.]?

FM: No, I'm not sure what she did there. She was handling the (fish), I'm sure, because she (wore) a white apron and a white cap.

MK: Did your mother ever discuss how she felt about, say, being a worker, say, as a maid in a *Haole* family or a tuna packer worker, versus [eventually] being the owner of a saimin stand?

FM: Not to me, no. I think her primary concern, of course, was her family, you know, see that we had enough to eat. But she also had this debt that she was trying to pay off. So she worked very hard all her life and I think that drove her the early years when I was growing up. I think they finally paid off all the debt after the war. During the war I guess business was very good, so she was able to save enough to pay off the debt. That was very important to her.

MK: So as a child were you conscious of this situation, the debts that your family had incurred?

FM: Yes. 'Cause she used to tell me. The Yano and Hayashi families (loaned us money). Sometimes I guess she couldn't pay the rent or something and they would say, "Okay, don't worry about it, pay it next month." So she always (told) the kids that you must never forget the Yanos and the Hayashis. Yes, we were aware of it. But, I didn't feel deprived in terms of clothing or food or things like that, because, you know, I didn't feel that we were worse off than other people. I guess we were, but I wasn't aware of it. (Chuckles)

MK: We've been talking about your parents' saimin stand but we haven't really gotten into what this saimin stand was. Nowadays we don't have a saimin stand.

FM: (No.)

MK: What was the saimin stand back then?

FM: What I remember is that we had—we were living in a house—the first floor was converted into a saimin restaurant. We had a good friend who was a carpenter, who was very clever with his hands, made a pushcart for us. And actually operable. And every morning—no, every night it would be rolled into (the house) where (we had) the tables and chairs and every morning it would be rolled out. And in the back of the house we had a little room where my father would make the saimin and *udon* and wonton, you know, the flat sheets. Initially he (did) it the old-fashioned way, you know, chopping it by hand. And he was very good. He was very fast. (FM makes rapid chopping sound.) (Chuckles) But because of his mechanical background and knowing about, I guess, the *soba*, *udon* type of business in Japan, one year he went back to Japan and bought and brought home a saimin-making machine. And after that it was mechanized. And so when I was going to high school, I started on weekends and (holidays), making the saimin. So I know how to make saimin. (Chuckles)

WN: You mean from scratch you make the dough and . . .

FM: Yes, you take a 100-pound sack of flour, and you crack a dozen eggs into it, and my mother would mix a pan full of water and salt and something else, some kind of a salt that she would put in. And then you pour it in there and mix it, and then you start kneading it and finally get it into small enough pieces so you can feed it through the rollers and then keep working it until you get it nice and smooth. Then send it into the cutter. And as (it is) cut, you make it into little bunches. I got pretty good at it because if you don't do it right, some bunches are big and some are small. But if you do it just right and keep up with the machine, you can time it so that it all comes out the same. And I remember I used to make 400 bunches with one sack of flour.

WN: Let me just turn the . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: Okay.

FM: And in that process, the dough gets sticky, and if you don't watch out it sticks to the roller and then it gums everything up. So what you have to do is keep putting cornstarch on it. That keeps the dough from sticking to the different parts, moving parts. And the way we used to apply the cornstarch is we take a little bag, like a rice bag or something, and put the cornstarch in there and you kind of shake it so it dusts everything including (chuckles) . . .

WN: Yourself.

FM: . . . all your hair and (clothes). So when I finished making the saimin and come out of there, I'm white, top to bottom.

(Laughter)

FM: Especially when you cut it, it's critical because if you don't dust it properly, when you try to cook it they're all stuck together, you know, you got to kind of pry it apart. So as the thing comes down you dust it and then make it into a bunch and then you keep going. So while you're cutting it you have to keep going. But when you're just passing it through the roller you're just waiting for the (dough) to come through. That's when I used to read. And you kind of put your hand on the roller as the dough goes through, gets thinner (each) time, and then is taken (up by) the other (roll). So you have to make sure that it's feeding properly. You could do that by just keeping your hand on the roll and kind of adjusting it and reading.

(Laughter)

WN: So you had one machine that would actually knead and flatten the dough and another machine that cuts?

FM: No, it's the same machine.

WN: Oh, it's the same machine.

FM: The first part is, you have a large table, maybe about four foot by seven feet, onto which you dump your flour, and then at the back of the table, say if the table is like this, you're standing (in front. At the) back of the table, there is a bar like this attached to the table, and a wooden round (pole), about (four inches) thick. And at the very end there's a metal strap, round strap around it. So what you do is you stick that portion underneath this piece so it (creates) leverage. And you have all the dough (in the center of the table). So what you do is you press down on (the front end of the pole), and of course, it's held (at the other end) by this crosspiece, and so you just keep kneading (the dough) like that. And when I was young and kind of light yet, I couldn't just do that so I had to jump on it and. . . .

(Laughter)

FM: So you have to do that first. Because you couldn't feed it into the machine until you got it to a certain consistency and certain thickness. So you do that, oh perhaps, for half an hour or so. You keep kneading it with this (pole) and then you fold it by hand and then do it again until it became the right consistency. Then you slice it up into pieces and then you start feeding it. And then as each piece got thinner and thinner, you roll it up into the roll, pick it up, move it, run it through (again). At the beginning it might be about (one inch) thick, then you gradually bring it down to the right (thickness).

WN: How many times would you put the same piece through?

FM: Oh, probably five or six times. 'Cause if you do it too fast, then it gets all messed up because the inside of the dough is still very sticky. The outside you have the cornstarch so it won't stick. So you got to gradually press it down. And for saimin you have to (reduce it to a) certain thickness, and for wonton it's the same dough but you gotta make it a lot thinner. And that's the one that's difficult because if you don't do it right, it gets all torn up. And if you make it too thick, then when you eat it it's kind of starchy. So that took some art.

WN: Did you do the wonton also?

FM: Oh yeah, yeah.

MK: That making of the saimin and wonton, was it a one-man job or you need. . . .

FM: Basically one person. So if I make, say, a bag of saimin, a 100-pound bag, it (would) last maybe a couple of days. Later when it became, you know, when the store was busier, then sometimes you have to make one bag a day. Might take three hours to do it. So it was a good job for me.

WN: So you didn't have to do that every day, then?

FM: When I was in high school it was primarily a weekend job. During the week I had to study. But sometimes like, say, summer vacation I would do it during the [week]day also. And I guess that's part of the reason I didn't play as much because when my friends were out playing I was making saimin. But I didn't mind it because it gave me a chance to (chuckles) read.

WN: So what about *udon*? Is it the same dough but just thicker?

FM: *Udon* is different. You don't put the egg or you don't put the special salt that—Chinese salt that they use. It's just water and ordinary Hawaiian salt that we used to use. And then, of course, it's thicker. *Udon* is a lot easier to make than saimin and certainly wonton is the hardest.

WN: Now, you said that you folks had *soba*, too?

FM: No, we didn't make *soba*. For New Year's eve we would eat *soba* but I don't ever recall anyone ever making that. I guess we went and bought that. You needed a special flour.

MK: So at the saimin stand, your dad or yourself made the saimin.

FM: Right.

MK: And then. . . .

FM: My mother and my sisters would do the other things. Like, my mother, first thing in the morning would make the soup, the *dashi*, for that noon and evening. And she would put in things that nowadays, I don't think anyone can afford to put in. She would use dried scallops, dried shrimps, *konbu*, and pork, I mean pigs' bones that she'd go to the market to get and that would be added. She'd boil that and she would spend probably half a day making that soup stock. And it was very good.

MK: Sounds good.

(Laughter)

FM: And it was done all (over) a wooden fire. She would stick in the firewood and get it going and. . . . And then my sisters would help. We would sell barbecue meats so they had to slice the meat and string it up [on sticks]. And my mother would do all the shopping. She'd go to Chinatown and buy the *char siu* and *kamaboko*, things like that. And vegetables, the *negi*. And when my sisters were home, they would cut it up. And then they would have to make the, you know, those thin (sheets) of (fried) eggs?

MK: Mm hmm [yes].

FM: They would have to make those, you know. The way you do that, you scramble the egg, and then you pour it into a pan and then pour out the [residue], right away so it's very thin. And then you have to peel that off and turn it over without tearing it, so that takes. . . . So when they finished with that, they would have a stack of these thin egg sheets, then they would have to (slice) that up. And the *negi*, of course, had to be cut up and the barbecued meat had to be sliced and put on sticks. Barbecue meat used to take fairly long to cook. So what they used to do is they would precook it, maybe 75 percent cooked. So what they would do is they soak it in the soy sauce, you know, *shōyu* and ginger and sugar. And during the day, they would cook those through where it was not fully cooked because then it would be too tough. So when people came and said they wanted one *wonton min* and two barbecue, they would take the barbecue that's precooked and basically warm it up, and it would be ready just right for eating.

And in the meantime, you know, the saimin doesn't take long to make. So when you serve it you get both the saimin and the barbecue hot and ready to eat. And I tell you, that was the best saimin.

(Laughter)

WN: I'm wondering, too, today you go to, say, Shiro's [Hula Hula Drive In & Saimin Haven] and you order this type of saimin and this type of saimin and this type of saimin, but in those days did they just—it was just saimin and your mother put all those things in?

FM: Yes.

WN: Nobody asked for . . .

FM: And the wonton, of course, you have to chop up the meat, I mean the pork, and add the seasoning. And then individually (made by hand), so my sisters would do that. So there were only, I think, four things you could order. One is *udon*, and if you order *udon* it just came standard. Instead of *char siu* you get *kamaboko*. The *dashi* is the same, but the noodle is different. And then one is saimin, the other is *wonton min*, and the other is just plain wonton [in soup]. Some people just liked the wonton. So those are four things you could order. And barbecue meat, which was a favorite. So very simple.

WN: Besides the *negi* was there any vegetables?

FM: No, we used just the *tamago*, *negi* and *char siu*. Didn't occur to us that you can put all that other stuff in there.

(Laughter)

WN: Yeah, yeah.

MK: Don't complicate things. So how many people could your family serve at any one time at the saimin stand?

FM: Oh, it was, I would guess, I'm just guessing here, we had inside maybe about—we could handle a dozen, fifteen people. And outside another ten. "Outside" meaning that, inside is where we can close up everything. There were about, as I recall, about four tables, so you can seat maybe four or five to a table, maybe twenty inside. And outside there was a bench, kind of a (semi-)circular bench and a curved table and people sat there to eat. Sometimes people would come and buy it and take it home because they want to eat at home. And at one time we used to have car service, too, where somebody would come and stay in the car, and they would order it. So—it was my father's design—you take a long tray, instead of hooking it on the door like we do nowadays, take a long tray, slide it through (laughs) the window and so you eat off of that.

WN: You mean it goes all the way from one window to the other?

FM: Yeah, all the way across, right.

WN: All the way across.

(Laughter)

MK: Did other saimin stands provide that kind of car service, too?

FM: I don't know. I have no idea. (Chuckles)

MK: That's kind of ingenious.

FM: 'Cause where we were, between the—there was a service station at the corner and a taxi stand and a barbershop. And then this sort of courtyard, it was sort of like a garage where people park their cars. There was some space in there. And also on the street, so, oh we could handle not many, three, four cars in that way.

MK: When were the busiest times for the business?

FM: Weekends usually were the busiest. But on a more or less daily basis including the weekends, there was a theater, Kewalo Theater. After the last show was over, people would stop by, have a bowl of saimin or *wonton min*, and then go home. So every night about that time it (got) busy. And when that was done they would clean up and close up. Because after that people may still come but they're just stragglers. And by then it was kind of late, also. 'Cause my mother would open it up before lunch, people (would) come in for lunch. And then there (would be) a lull, and then they come in for supper, and there's a lull, and then the after-dinner crowd, I mean the theater crowd. So there (were) three peaks every day. So that was a long workday for her.

MK: And who worked at the saimin stand?

FM: My two sisters—I have three sisters. My younger sister [Nancy Ritsue Matsunaga] was—she's now big and healthy, (chuckles) but at that time she had some health problems so she didn't help too much. But my two sisters above me [Janet Midori Matsuda and Betty Hideyo Matsuda], after school or after work would help. So they, in effect, had two jobs. They worked during the day, come home, had dinner and helped. Then they would make the saimin, I mean they would cook the saimin or serve it or wash the dishes. My dad used to do the dishes, also. He was always in the back, he didn't like to be in the front. So both my older sisters were involved in making the saimin and serving the saimin, et cetera. And everything that they made, including tips and everything, all went into a pot for family expenses.

WN: What were your parents' hours? I know you said that she opened it just before lunch, but when did they actually just start . . .

FM: Oh, she would start probably eight o'clock in the morning. Because, you know, all the preparations—in her case she would have to go to the market to buy the fresh things for that day. Because the refrigerators at that time were not—in fact, in the early days we still took ice deliveries, you know. We had a friend, I remember, Mr. Motonaga would come with his truck and deliver the ice with the tongs. So she had to go shopping every day. For certain things, she had to go all the way to Chinatown, like *char siu*, and stuff.

WN: How did she go there?

FM: By bus.

WN: Bus?

FM: Yeah. When I was in high school, my father had a car, '34 Plymouth. And I think I was one of the few boys, in my group at least, that had access to a car. (Chuckles) Part of that time, remember, he was working as a mechanic, so he would drive to work. And he knew how to take care of his car. But she would go shopping, buy the things, come home, and then start preparing. So she had, oh my goodness, she must have put in eighteen-hour days. Maybe that's---certainly fifteen hours.

MK: And the saimin stand was open seven days a week?

FM: I think we closed Sundays. One day a week we closed. But otherwise. . . . Saturday was the busiest day so you couldn't afford to close. And on a weekday, there were enough shops around there, so people came to eat at lunchtime. And then about dinnertime, maybe it's a snack or whatever, but they come and eat.

WN: You said that your mother was, more or less, the one who was in charge of the saimin stand, and your father was working outside?

FM: Yes. But he gave that [other job] up after a while because the saimin stand was so successful, people would come from all over Honolulu to come eat the Matsuda saimin.

WN: Were there other saimin stands in Kaka'ako?

FM: I think there were a couple of others but more restaurants. You got to go in and sit down. Ours was different because it was really a saimin stand in the sense that it was a pushcart and it looked like a saimin stand. I guess there must have been at least another one in Kaka'ako but it was part of a restaurant. And there was another one, I think, in McCully someplace. There were not too many during those days.

MK: And the saimin stand was known as the Matsuda saimin . . .

FM: Or Kaka'ako.

MK: Or Kaka'ako saimin stand.

FM: Yes, I mean we didn't have a name actually but people called it the Matsuda saimin stand or Kaka'ako saimin stand.

MK: Was there ever a sign?

FM: No. You had to know where it was.

(Laughter)

WN: Did you have---what kind of drinks?

FM: Oh, just soda water.

WN: Sodas.

FM: No liquor or anything. No beer.

WN: *Ocha*?

FM: I'm sure we must have. I don't remember it. I remember that we had soda water.

MK: Were the hours flexible so that if there were customers who came really late your mom would still accommodate them?

FM: Yes, she was that type. So normally, because these (were) really steady customers so they knew when it was going to close, but sometimes if they came a little bit late she would fix something for them. We had—she especially—she made a lot of friends.

(Laughter)

FM: I was like my father. My job was done in the back, and the saimin was all ready, you know, they're all made. Then I didn't help in the front because I'd be studying.

WN: Your sisters waited on the tables?

FM: Oh yes.

MK: And you were saying that people came from all over.

FM: Yes. We didn't advertise, of course, so everything was word of mouth. So people heard about it and they came. They must've liked it because they kept coming back. So the business was very successful. When you figure that, I don't know how much money they owed but whatever it was, if you're going to charge ten cents for a bowl of saimin, with all the ingredients going in, and all the labor going in, you pay the rent and (utilities), and then have enough left over to pay off a debt, you know. That takes a lot of work and a lot of time. I think eventually the price went up to, about twenty-five cents. (Chuckles) And I think the barbecue stick was initially five cents and eventually went up to ten cents, something like that.

WN: So this debt you're talking about was incurred through the restaurant that folded because of the depression?

FM: Yes.

MK: How long did your parents continue with the saimin stand?

FM: You know, that lasted until the mid-[19]50s when they retired. After they paid off their debts. In the early [19]50s when I was away, they bought a home in Kaimukī. And, along about '55, '56, they finally decided to retire. By then they (were) living in Kaimukī and commuting to

Kaka'ako to do the business.

MK: And it was always at that location all through those years?

FM: Yes.

WN: How far away was your house from the stand?

FM: Oh, right above.

WN: Oh, you lived right above?

FM: Yes. It was a two-story house. Say, this is the place where the customers ate, the stand was outside, and then there's the benches, like that, and then behind that is our kitchen where they prepared our family food as well as stuff for the saimin stand. And upstairs were sleeping quarters, and behind that was a little room where I used to make the saimin. Everything, very compact.

MK: I was told that in Kaka'ako there used to be, maybe, two *o-furo*, two public baths?

FM: There was one right at our (courtyard). At one point, when we first moved there, I remember us having to use the public bath. And then later my father built our own (*furo*) so we didn't have to go there. It was, oh, I don't know, probably a couple of dozen families used that. And all Japanese, of course.

MK: Your dad was very good with his hands.

FM: Yes, he could do all kinds of things.

MK: You mentioned that your dad had gone to Japan on a trip and he brought back the saimin machine.

FM: Yes.

MK: Were other saimin stands using machines like that?

FM: Gee, I have no idea.

MK: And also, I was curious, why did he go back to Japan at that time?

FM: I don't remember. But I think he must have figured that (chuckles) this is taking too long.

(Laughter)

MK: Obviously your parents worked very hard.

FM: Oh yes. And so did my sisters, you know, I had it relatively easy because as you know, the only son in a Japanese family has kind of a privileged status, and so they indulged me. I liked to read so I would read. My job was to make the saimin but after I got that done, I was free to

do whatever. My sisters, at least in terms of hours, when they were going to school, they had to help at home. And even when they started working, everything that they earned, the paycheck went to—they didn't keep it for themselves. It went into the family pot, plus everything that we could make in the saimin business went into the pot. So they have been working hard all their lives.

MK: In terms of their opportunities, what opportunities did they have for schooling?

FM: Both of them finished high school and then started working right away. During the day they worked and during the night they worked. And Saturday nights, you know, when kids their age went out on dates and stuff, they had to work. So those two never got married. (They) lived with (my parents). Both our parents are gone now, but they're [FM's sisters] living together in the old Kaimukī home. Actually now they're living in (a new house) on that same lot. The first house that my parents bought, well, that lot had four houses on it. And they lived in one and rented the rest. As I say my mother had a pretty good business sense. And then eventually, the (three smaller) homes were torn down, and they built a new one in which they lived. (Recently) they tore down (the last old house) and they built a new one. They're living in that, and they sold the (other home). The lot was big enough that it could be subdivided. So they're living very comfortably now. And they really deserve it.

WN: How old were you when you first started working in the saimin stand?

FM: Oh, high school age.

WN: You said you liked to read while you were kneading the dough, what kinds of things did you read?

FM: Mostly Japanese magazines, novels.

WN: In Japanese [language]?

FM: Yes. I started reading Japanese, I guess, before I read English books. You know, I learned English as a foreign language when I started going to Pohukaina School. But because my parents were very strong on education and all they knew was Japanese, I guess I was read to in Japanese. So I was more comfortable reading Japanese magazines and novels. In fact, there's a funny story, I read *Call of the Wild*, you know, Jack London's book, in Japanese first. (Chuckles)

WN: Oh.

FM: Yes. And also another book, *The Lost Continent*, which I read in Japanese. And I enjoyed it so much that I thought I better read it in the original, in English.

(Laughter)

FM: But I sort of remember, when I first read *Call of the Wild*, I didn't realize that it was a Japanese translation of an English book. And so when I later ran across the book and I thumbed through it, I said, oh, they translated this into English.

(Laughter)

MK: That's great.

FM: I enjoyed reading. My parents subscribed to Japanese newspapers, Japanese magazines, and stuff, so that's what I read. And as I said there was Hakubundo, a Japanese bookstore. So when I ran out of reading material I would go over there. Of course, I didn't have money to buy (anything, but) the owner there was kind enough not to kick me out. So I'd take a book, sit in the corner and read it. And our neighbor, his name was Mr. Ishibashi, a very kind gentleman, he would give me magazines and books to read, of course, all in Japanese. So that's what I grew up with.

WN: So you read *kanji*, from an early age?

FM: Oh yes.

MK: So which Japanese-language school did you attend?

FM: Kaka'ako, and then after that Chūō Gakuin.

MK: How many grades did you complete?

FM: I was in my eleventh grade when the war started. That's when it [Japanese-language school] was terminated, of course.

MK: And what did you feel about going to Japanese school, Japanese-language school?

FM: Well, I enjoyed it. I didn't feel that I was being deprived of my play. (Laughs) And I had good friends there, you know, as I said our social life sort of revolved around the Japanese community. My good friends at Pohukaina School were going to the same Japanese[-language] school, and there were all kinds of events going on. We'd have—I wasn't good at it but I was on the *kendō* team. Well, everybody was on the team, everybody (chuckles) who took *kendō*—you know, we had a Kaka'ako Japanese School *kendō* team and we'd go and have contests with other schools, you know, McCully, Mō'ili'ili. There was this one-(armed) swordsman at McCully (chuckles) that was a terrific swordsman. He beat everybody.

(Laughter)

WN: Really?

FM: Anyway, so I wasn't very good but we did those things. In fact, that probably was the only competitive sport that I have ever engaged in, both English and Japanese school. So I enjoyed it.

MK: When you mentioned that the books, the magazines that you were reading in your free time were Japanese-language ones, that leads me think that you were very good in Japanese.

FM: Well, I did okay. But, you know, that sort of was my first language. It's no longer that, but. So all I know about the Japanese language, really, is what's leftover from 1940, '41. I had

studied until 1941. I read then, Japanese newspapers and magazines a lot better than I can now.

MK: And how about your verbal Japanese?

FM: Also better then than now. Now, you know, I kind of stumble around. Of course, I've learned a few new words that I didn't know then, but the basic language, basic *kanji*, at least on a day-to-day basis, is what I have leftover from then.

MK: When I interview people who went to Japanese-language schools back then, they would often talk about *shūshin*, the value of education. What are your thoughts about *shūshin*?

FM: Well, it must have shaped my thinking and my values. I don't recall it in sort of explicit terms that this is what governs my life, et cetera. But the values that we were taught have remained with me and it guides the way I think and the way I act. So it's been for me, I think, very—had very, very long-lasting effects. Whether they're good or bad, you know, is another question, but certainly exposed to it at an early age not only at school but at home as well. That's the way I was brought up, so that's what I am.

WN: You said that your parents stressed education. How did they communicate that to you?

FM: You know in---I guess this is typical of a Japanese family, it's primarily through my mother saying how important it is. And she would say, because she herself was not well educated, that if I'm going to (succeed), it has to be through education. And that's the only way that we can better ourselves. And fortunately for me, I enjoyed reading, I enjoyed—sounds kind of dumb—but I enjoyed studying. (Chuckles) I enjoyed math and science, so I guess I had an inquisitive mind so if I didn't understand something I'd really dig after it, and got a lot of satisfaction doing that. I (received) good grades at school, so she was very pleased and she kept encouraging me. I remember, when they had a parent-teacher conference or something, my father never used to go. (Chuckles) My mother would go. And she used to tell me that it's too bad because the teachers would tell her that they ought to send me to Punahou [School] except that, you know, (we're) too poor. But (it didn't matter to me). Really, I consider myself very fortunate, the kind of life I led, the kind of places I lived in, because I never felt that I was deprived or disadvantaged in any way.

WN: Were you aware that being the only boy in a family of three girls and one boy, you know, Japanese, being the only son—were you aware at that early stage that you were in essence, you know, the privileged one?

FM: Oh yeah, of course. (Chuckles)

WN: You mean in terms of education, too?

FM: Yes. Not that explicitly in education, but I was the only one that went to college. My two sisters---of course, the times were different because they had gone through, you know, financially more difficult times, but they went to work as soon as high school was finished. But there was no question that I would go to college. But in other ways, (also). They couldn't eat until I was there to eat, (chuckles) dinnertime. My parents insisted that we all eat together. Of course, my father could start anytime he wanted to.

(Laughter)

FM: But they couldn't eat unless I was there. And so if I'm in Mr. Ishibashi's home or Hakubundo, someplace reading, they had to come looking for me and say, "You better come home. We're hungry."

(Laughter)

FM: And *o-furo*, too. When we had our own, they could not bathe until after I was finished. So I lived like a king or prince, or something.

(Laughter)

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 25-16-1-96; SIDE ONE

MK: You made the comment that there was never any question that you would go to college. What did you know about college as a child or what did your family know about college?

FM: Nothing. Well, maybe I shouldn't say "nothing." But my parents, of course, knew about college, (but) they (had) never been to it, but knew that's where people went to get more education. But as to what one did in college, I don't think they had any idea what I should study. Because I liked science and mathematics, they thought, you know, whatever I was interested in is what I should study. But they couldn't advise me, say, to go study physics which I would have enjoyed or engineering, which I ended up doing. I think my mother had some notion that becoming a doctor would be a good idea, but she had no idea what was entailed in that. So I had assumed I was going to go to college, and as a matter of fact, many of my friends did, also. But I had no role model, you know. Most of my friends, in fact, all of my friends came from similar backgrounds. There were no professionals among my group. So when we went to college, most of them went into just arts and science. Just, "I'm in college," but they were not sure what they were there for.

I was advised by somebody that I should go into engineering because I liked math and science. Had somebody advised me to go into chemistry or physics or biology or something like that, I would probably have done that because to me, it didn't make any difference at that point. Once I started in engineering and just taking the basic courses, I remember one of my teachers, my teacher in mathematics who was himself a physicist, encouraged me to switch to physics. But I didn't know what physics was (chuckles), I mean, I knew what physics was but I didn't know what one did as a physicist in terms of—as a profession. I knew what engineers did. So I never did switch until basically it was too late. Anyway, I enjoyed engineering.

MK: You mentioned that when you were growing up you didn't have a role model.

FM: Mm hmm [yes].

MK: Someone going to college. When you did hear about universities and colleges, what did you

think of it? Did you think of university and college as being something that everyone should have access to or something that only richer people went to? What did you view it as?

FM: Well, I guess my thought about that was a lot more narrow. I just saw that as an opportunity to do what I enjoy which is study. I said, oh great, I get to learn more things. Remember, in McKinley [High School] I enjoyed mathematics, I took all the math I could take at McKinley and college meant now I can do more math. And the science courses that I had at McKinley were rather limited. I said, well, college is where you can spend more time learning things. And I didn't really look at it beyond that. If I were a surfer, I'd say, you know, I'm going to do more surfing because that's what I enjoy. And to me, studying was that, a source of enjoyment. Which is kind of, you know, sounds kind of nerdy.

(Laughter)

WN: Any influential teachers at Washington [Intermediate School] and McKinley [High School]?

MK: And Pohukaina [Elementary School]?

WN: And Pohukaina.

FM: The only teacher that I remember at Pohukaina is Mrs. See. She was a Hawaiian teacher and she taught Hawaiian music. She was my homeroom teacher. The other classes came to our class to learn singing, so we spent a fair amount of time just singing, which I enjoyed. I've always enjoyed singing. I remember her as a teacher. I think there were two (sisters), one was a principal and one was something else, Mrs. Angus, I think, their names were, or Miss Angus. But those are just vague memories. So Pohukaina School, I don't remember very much about what I studied or what we did except learn Hawaiian songs.

But when I went to Washington [Intermediate School], then I became, I guess, more involved in learning about. . . . I guess when I was at Pohukaina I was more oriented toward Japanese[-language] school. But (when) I (went) to Washington [Intermediate School], there I met and became good friends with people from other ethnic groups. That's where I made my first really good Chinese friends, for example. And I became much more aware of the, you might say, life beyond Kaka'ako. Of course, I had to go a lot further to get to school.

MK: In those days, Washington Intermediate had students coming in from where?

FM: Oh, I think we were at just about at the edge of Washington's district because I think Central Intermediate was probably just as close, which was the other school close by. So Kaka'ako, certainly Mō'ili'ili, McCully, all that area. Up *mauka* further, too, I think.

MK: Kind of widened your horizons.

FM: Yes, really.

MK: Beyond Kaka'ako.

FM: Yes.

MK: So in intermediate school did you develop certain interests, certain specific interests?

FM: I guess still (telephone rings) science, mathematics sort of thing. Oh, studies in general, I guess. I just liked to study all kinds of things. I don't remember any course that I took that I. . . . Oh, I'm sorry, I do remember one. It was in college, but (chuckles). Growing up, I never felt that any subject or any course was dull and uninteresting. And the one that I didn't like in college (chuckles) was a highway engineering course. It was a terrible course.

(Laughter)

MK: From the future director of [the state Department of] Transportation.

FM: I know, isn't it. . . .

(Laughter)

FM: Yes. In fact, that course, if I may jump ahead a few years, is what caused me to leave the University of Hawai'i. Because I had this particular teacher and this course right after lunch, and that's the worst time to take a course, even a good course. But a junk course, that's the worst time. And I'd fall asleep in his class. But it was a dumb course, the way he taught it anyway. And that was at the end of my sophomore year, the second semester of my sophomore year. And looking to my junior year, when most of my heavy engineering courses would start, I saw that the same (professor) was going to teach about three other courses that I had to take. And that's when I said, "I'm out of here." (Chuckles) So I started looking for another school to go to, and of course, it had to be on the Mainland. And at that point, I didn't care very much as it couldn't be worse than what was going to happen to me if I stayed. So I went to the small school in Indiana [Rose Polytechnic Institute], which turned out to be an excellent school. I was told that it was an excellent school but, you know, sometimes you don't know until you get there. But it was really a very good school.

Coming back to your question, at Washington, I don't remember any specific teachers there. Really, I think when I went to McKinley, that's when I started getting teachers that I think began to influence my life. I mean, sure, all of them did up to that point, I'm just—I wasn't aware of it.

MK: So what happened at McKinley?

FM: Well, I remember a couple of teachers in mathematics that challenged me, and that I enjoyed. One was Frank Hluboky, he was the football coach. (Chuckles) And he was a mathematics teacher, a good one. He was kind of rotund and he said he gave this test to every class that he's ever had and there was only one (student) in all the years that he'd taught that could solve this one problem. And then he dared us to (laughs) solve the problem. Nobody in my class did. And the (student) who did was Ken [Kenichi] Watanabe, who [became], you know, a physics professor [at the University of Hawai'i and elsewhere]. He's the (one) that told me that I should switch to physics. So Ken Watanabe was a legend in Frank Hluboky's school, (WN laughs) I mean, class, in algebra.

And the other one was, oh shucks, I've forgotten her name, but she taught geometry. She had one of these hyphenated names, oh yes, Logan-Smith. I studied geometry and spherical

trigonometry with her, and those I enjoyed very much. And then there was another (teacher) named Dorsey who taught chemistry. And these were all good teachers. So when people talk about public schools being not very good, I say, well, I can't comment on how they might be today, but in our days, we had excellent teachers. And in the social science side, Mrs. Wilfong was my junior homeroom teacher. She was a Mainland teacher. And I guess it sort of raised my consciousness about people not from Hawai'i. And Mrs. Griegs, who was my senior homeroom teacher. She was more a *kama'āina* person. Very gentle and very caring teacher. So I must say, McKinley to me, was a wonderful school.

WN: Was Miles Carey principal at that time?

FM: Yes. I had no dealings with him. My life revolved around the classroom and the classroom teacher. I was, what, senior class treasurer, (but) I wasn't very interested in that sort of thing. I guess I ran for (that position) because somebody said I should.

(Laughter)

FM: Not because I wanted to. (Chuckles) So in terms of the teachers and the subjects, McKinley gave me an excellent education.

MK: In terms of relationships that extended beyond school, with your work life or other parts of your life, did you form lasting relationships there at McKinley?

FM: Yes, yes. My friends at McKinley are still my good friends. We had our fiftieth reunion about three years ago. My classmates at McKinley did very well. Dan [Daniel K.] Inouye is my classmate. In fact, he's from Washington Intermediate. And Dick [Richard H.] Kosaki, who, you know, was [UH-Mānoa] chancellor, we were classmates as well. I think he went to a different intermediate [school]. Harold Hee, he was a vice-president at C. Brewer [and Company, Ltd.] in human resources. Good friend. Kiyoshi Kimura, who's kind of a—he's a funny guy, he's now in charge of the Kaka'ako *Chihō-jin Kai*.

(Laughter)

FM: We went to Pohukaina together. He's one of my Pohukaina friends. His father had a restaurant on Alakea Street. So whenever we have our *Chihō-jin Kai* meeting, I mean, annual party, he talks about the old days and he talks the way I imagine we used to talk when we were kids, you know, mixture of Japanese and pidgin English. And he's a riot. He worked for Japan Airlines on the West Coast for a long time but he's back here now. So anyway, my friends from those days are still my friends.

MK: I guess there's Shiro Amioka, the Amioka family?

FM: Yes, Shiro was a couple of years ahead of me, so I knew him but I wouldn't say that we were friends in the sense that we hung around together. My memories of Shiro during our Kaka'ako days, he was the captain of the *kendō* team. And he was not very large but he was very aggressive and very good. His brother used to be a boxing champion for the Kaka'ako boxing team.

WN: Is this Wally [Wallace S. Amioka]?

FM: Yes. He ended up working for Shell [Oil Company]. So my recollection of Shiro from the Kaka'ako days, he was a *kendō* captain and he used to "bust me up," as we say.

(Laughter)

WN: Could he do well against the one-armed boy?

FM: Yeah, I think he was probably the one that could handle. . . . The one-armed guy was Mikami, as I recall. He was an excellent swordsman. But he had an advantage over us because the way he would fight is that he'd have his sword up here.

WN: Over, above his head?

FM: Yes. And we have to hold it down here [about waist-high], right? So we gotta bring it up and then down. All he had to do was, do that.

(Laughter)

FM: Oh, he was fast. He was very good at it.

WN: Shall we end here?

MK: I was thinking if we end here and continue next time with maybe McKinley High School on to UH.

FM: Oh, okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-17-2-96

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

August 29, 1996

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project. Today is August 29, 1996 and we're at the Mānoa Innovation Center in Honolulu, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto.

MK: Today, we're going to start the second session of your interview series. Last time we ended with your years at McKinley High School, so we're going to continue with your years at McKinley. You were telling us some of your positive learning experiences you had at McKinley, like Mr. Hluboky and some of the other teachers. What negative experiences, if any, did you have at McKinley?

FM: Well, you know, it's been a long time so I guess I've forgotten if there were any. But all the memories that I retained are pleasant memories. I'm sure I must have had bad days. (Laughs) You know, not all teachers are great, but if there were any I've erased them from my memory and I've retained—you know how you purge your files? You purge the bad stuff and keep the good stuff. And maybe subconsciously, you know, that's happened. But McKinley was a great school and I've had a lot of great experiences there. I really can't remember anything negative. Well, I've just thought of one, it's really not negative in the sense that I have bad memories of it, but when I was—I guess the first year—a sophomore, we had a physical examination. I guess all students—boys were supposed to take ROTC [Reserve Officers Training Corps] and/or athletics. And they discovered that I have a heart murmur. So I could not—not that I wanted to—but they told me I can't take ROTC nor participate in athletics. So while my classmates were out playing football or baseball or whatever, I was sent to a rest room. (Chuckles) Every day when it's time for the students to go out and engage in team sports or (ROTC), I'd be sent to a rest room to rest for an hour. Which, of course, persisted in the sense that when I went to the University [of Hawai'i] I couldn't—again, not that I wanted to—but I wasn't allowed to take ROTC which many of my friends did, nor participate in any of the athletics. Jumping ahead, I took swimming, I think, as I recall, my first semester. Then my record caught up with me at the university and they told me you're not supposed to be in swimming, so I was told to drop it, which I did. I didn't have a rest room at that time, I mean it's just a free period. And the funny part of this story, which I remember, is that at the end of the semester I got a C for swimming.

(Laughter)

FM: I only went to one class.

(Laughter)

FM: But anyway. So I say that's negative in the sense that it didn't get me involved with my classmates in things that, say, high school boys normally do. But other than that it was very nice.

MK: When you were sent to the rest room, were you alone in the rest room?

FM: No, there were others, other people, other kids who for one reason or another, could not participate, you know, boys and girls. As I recall, we had little cots and we just relaxed for an hour.

WN: Oh I see, a rest room not a restroom, not a bathroom.

FM: No, no, no.

(Laughter)

WN: I thought, what a terrible way to spend an hour every day.

FM: Locked up in the toilet.

(Laughter)

FM: No, I'm pretty sure that it was called the rest room.

WN: Did you get to do any studying, or homework?

FM: Yes, you could read, but you couldn't take a class instead, you just had to have a quiet period. And it turned out that heart murmur was nothing serious. I guess they were being extra cautious. I've never really had that problem, I certainly didn't have a problem when I volunteered (for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team), and throughout the war service and afterwards, I've had no problem. The doctors might just mention that, oh, you have a little murmur but nothing to worry about.

MK: I was wondering, because you're a product of the public schools, elementary school, intermediate school, high school, in your opinion, as a product of the public schools and as an educator, what did you think of public education?

FM: I thought in retrospect, you know, when you're in it it's kind of hard to evaluate because that was my world. I didn't know there was another world called Punahou or Saint Louis, right? So it was my world and I had a lot of good friends and was naturally interested and curious about things and I was able to learn. So I was fully occupied, had lots of homework, enjoyed it. I guess maybe one of the few kids that enjoyed homework. I thought the public school, certainly Washington [Intermediate School] where I started taking courses in algebra, which I guess, at that time, was kind of an advanced subject. It's like in high school you take college courses, you know, that sort of idea. And I was taking some algebra courses that I could get some credit for, not real credit, but it qualified me to take other courses at the high school level. So at Washington also, I must have been given good preparation because when I went to McKinley, I was able to take basically all the mathematics they could offer. At that time we

didn't have calculus, but we went all the way up to spherical geometry, which was the highest level course they had at high school. Now, calculus, analytical geometry, things like that I took as a freshman at the university they're offering in high school. So it's advanced to that extent. But I think we had a good solid foundation. When I went to the university I was fully qualified even to the extent—and this is kind of a funny story, too. One of the memorable teachers I had at McKinley was a Miss Keys. She was the English speech teacher. Really gentle lady, and always wore a big hat. And all of us had to take speech, you know, we're all kids from the street speaking pidgin English. So when I went to UH, at that time, everybody had to take speech unless you came from Roosevelt [High School] or places like that. But most of us from McKinley had to (take speech, sometimes more than once or twice), and again, Miss Keys must have done a good job because I was one of the few guys that didn't have to take speech. As far as I was concerned, I was talking pidgin English like everybody else.

(Laughter)

FM: So anyway, I have really nothing but good memories about McKinley.

MK: You mentioned Roosevelt High School. And in those days, that was the English-standard school.

FM: Right.

MK: What did you think about a system where you have McKinley and then you have Roosevelt, which was an English-standard school limited to certain students?

FM: Well, I didn't have any social consciousness about that. I had no envy or no desire to go there. I had, through (Chūō Gakuin), our Japanese[-language] school—I didn't have any friends at Roosevelt (until then)—but through our Japanese[-language] school where we had some girls from Roosevelt attending, I got to know some girls. And I thought boy, they had neat girls (at Roosevelt).

(Laughter)

FM: That was my extent of information about Roosevelt, and I guess that's the only thing that was important to me, you know, they had some good-looking girls there.

(Laughter)

MK: Well, now that we've gotten into girls, you mentioned at McKinley you made some lasting friendships, Dr. [Richard H.] Kosaki, George [R.] Ariyoshi . . .

FM: George not so because [he was] two years below me. And he went to, as I recall, Central Intermediate [School], and I went to Washington. So our paths really didn't cross until I served in the governor's [John A. Burns] cabinet, and George was then a [state] senator. That's when, because of state business, we would be at meetings, you know, hearings, et cetera. He was my youngest sister's classmate, and she's two years younger than me. I didn't know him. Besides when you're a senior, you can't be bothered with sophomores.

(Laughter)

FM: Those lowly beings, you know. (Chuckles) So no, I didn't know George unfortunately.

MK: So when you were at McKinley, then, who were your close set of friends?

FM: Basically classmates. When I was a sophomore, it was the sophomores. Although, I guess when I was a sophomore I got to know some upper classmen through some of the courses that I took. But basically, my classmates. So Dick Kosaki whom I knew from Washington [Intermediate School], we were together there. And, of course, Dan Inouye; Shigeto Kanemoto, who was Lisa Kanemoto's father, he died rather young. Ace Higuchi who worked for the East-West Center; well, Harold Hee, they're all classmates.

MK: And you also mentioned in the last interview that you were senior class treasurer. How did that happen?

FM: You know, I don't really know. (Chuckles) I really had no interest in campus politics and wasn't very active in it. I think somebody talked me into it, as I mentioned. It's not something that I said oh, I want to do. Somebody said, "Why don't you?"

"Ah, I don't want to do."

"Nah, why don't you?" (Chuckles)

So the thing that I remember about that is that if you wanted to run for an office, there was a school assembly and you had to make a speech. And I said, "I don't want to make a speech." The work of just keeping track of the money for the class, that was no problem. It's nothing glamorous and it's not something that you campaign to do. But mostly it was the aversion to making a public speech saying that I want that job. Because I didn't want it.

(Laughter)

FM: But I must have weakened because I remember making some kind of a speech, and to my surprise, getting elected. But it didn't mean very much in the sense that that didn't spark me into going into campus politics at the university level. I was active in club sort of things with my friends, you know, I just enjoyed good, friendly things to do.

MK: So when you were at McKinley, were you a member of clubs?

FM: Yes, our social club was what we called the Hi-Y, high school YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] groups. I belonged to one, (Kewalo Hi-Y), naturally Kaka'ako people. And then, of course, there were class functions and stuff. I guess I belonged to a couple of organizations like the Thomas C. Jaeger Science (Club), something like that. It's a high school science club. I belonged to that. And they had a group called the McKinley Citizenship Club, and National Honor Society, (organizations) that basically related to (academics). But the social club was the Hi-Y club.

MK: Nowadays, they have a lot of science fairs and competitions of all sorts for students. During your years at McKinley, were there competitions of that sort, and did you enter them?

FM: The last question first, no, I never entered anything like that and I think that's because we never had anything like that. There was only classroom work and play. (Chuckles) Nothing in

between.

MK: And during these years at McKinley . . .

FM: Oh, of course, I used to go to Japanese[-language] school, too, so after school we'd get on the streetcar or whatever and go up to Nu'uuanu where Chūō Gakuin was. So we were busy in that respect. And at Chūō Gakuin we had a different set of friends. That's where we had some Roosevelt girls.

(Laughter)

FM: I think even a couple of Punahou [School] boys.

MK: Oh, so who were some of the people who were going to Japanese[-language] school, then?

FM: A good friend of mine who was the senior class president (at McKinley), Alfred Tsukayama. He was from Kailua, and he and several boys from that side of the island. From my Kaka'ako gang, I think I (was) the only one that continued (at Chūō Gakuin). When I was at Pohukaina [School] most of the Japanese kids went to one or the other Japanese[-language] school. We had two in Kaka'ako. But I think most of them didn't continue beyond that. When they started going to intermediate school, they dropped out. So at Chūō Gakuin, as I say, I had basically a different set of friends. And also, at that level, we had the [Honpa] Hongwanji Japanese[-language] School and Chūō Gakuin. And lot of my classmates at McKinley who went to Japanese[-language] school, went to Hongwanji rather than to Chūō Gakuin.

MK: So at Chūō Gakuin you had some of these Roosevelt girls, you had these Punahou kids . . .

FM: At least one Punahou boy, yes. And kids from Farrington [High School] and other high schools.

MK: It was a very mixed group as opposed to your Kaka'ako Japanese[-language] school days.

FM: Right. Kaka'ako was sort of in that district, but at Chūō Gakuin it was all over.

MK: And I know that you had mentioned that when you were younger, the Japanese[-language] school was really a focus of your life when you were going to Pohukaina. But once you went to McKinley what role did the Japanese[-language] school then play in your life?

FM: It was still an important part of my life, and I learned a lot. And I made some very good friends who are still friends. But I guess the difference is that the Japanese[-language] school, as I said, it was a different set of friends, whereas when I was at Kaka'ako it was the same. You went to Pohukaina together, you went to Japanese[-language] school together, and you played together. So it was really one world, and a very small world at that. If I go back to Kaka'ako, which I do from time to time, and kind of drive around, I'm amazed at how small that world was. You know, it's only about two or three blocks.

So the Japanese[-language] school has had, in retrospect, a huge influence. Because I learned a lot of Japanese which, although I've forgotten a lot of it, enabled me to read Japanese magazines, and literature, and books, and understand most of what I hear on Japanese programs on TV and things like that. And then in my work, I've come into contact with a

number of Japanese people: government (and university) officials, business people, et cetera. And then normally I don't try to use Japanese in a formal or, say, technical setting because it's inadequate for that, and you know, I don't want to be inaccurate or (be misunderstood in) what I'm saying. But after the meetings on social things where mistakes can be excused, then I use Japanese because I'm fairly comfortable with it. So it's helped me personally, and I think it also helped me in the sense that when we had children, I could tell them about some of the things that I learned from my parents, but also things that I learned in Japanese[-language] school that I thought important and certainly affected my life. Had I not gone to Japanese[-language] school I probably would have acquired a different set of values and behave differently today than I do. So yeah, I think it's been important.

MK: At Japanese[-language] school, what kind of values did they emphasize?

FM: Well, you know, at the Chūō Gakuin level it was more academics. But at the Kaka'ako Japanese[-language] school level it was *a, i, u, e, o*, and composition, reading, et cetera. But there was what they called the *shūshin*. Talk about honor your parents, and honesty, and hard work, and all the things that, I think any, really when you think about it, except for honoring your parents which may be emphasized more in the Oriental culture, most of the things that any healthy society emphasizes and tries to pass on. There was a conscious effort to teach that, whereas in (today's) public schools, (value education is almost non-existent).

MK: When we talk to other people, the nisei generation, about Japanese[-language] school, some of them really liked it, some of them didn't like it. And when they went to higher grades, their feelings really solidified. They either really liked it or didn't like it. In your case. . . .

FM: Oh, I liked it. Again, it's both academically and socially. I had some good friends there. I enjoyed the company. You know, the teachers are really different in Japanese[-language] school. You have to adjust to that and say, well, that's the way he is. We had a teacher, his name was Yamamoto, we used to call him "Gombe." I don't know why. (Chuckles) He was very rough. And I personally didn't encounter his wrath but he had the reputation of being rough on students—didn't matter whether it was a boy or girl—very strict, good disciplinarian. But I suppose if you had a teacher like that today in a public school, you'd get all kinds of complaints from parents. But I guess I just said, well, that's the way he is because there were a lot of other teachers who were a lot more gentle, especially the women teachers were very nice. And I guess there were mostly women teachers, (only) a couple of men teachers.

MK: During that time that you were going to Japanese[-language] school, relations between Japan and the U.S. were become a little bit more strained. I know you were just in high school, but were you aware of this change?

FM: I was aware, I wasn't concerned. It was like, well, that's Tokyo or Washington [D.C.]. It wasn't real. Until December 7, [1941] it wasn't real. So I guess we lived in—or I lived in—I'm sure there were others who were much more aware of it, but my life revolved around my class and my friends, the next dance, or when's the next picnic, or things like that. So I guess I wasn't very socially conscious, (chuckles) or politically conscious.

MK: You were a teenager.

(Laughter)

MK: I'm curious, in 1941, what was your citizenship status?

FM: I'm sure it was dual, because it was automatic. Unless you overtly renounced your Japanese citizenship, it was automatically carried in their books. But it had no effect on my life, meaning that in anything that I did, I didn't have to declare that or it didn't affect anything that I did as a student. I worked during the summer like most kids in Kaka'ako. I worked at Hawaiian Pine[apple Co., Ltd], and one year for a small baby furniture company. But as far as I was concerned, I was an American citizen.

MK: You just mentioned that you worked part-time during the summers.

FM: Yes.

MK: How were those experiences working at Hawaiian Pine[apple Co., Ltd.] and at that furniture place?

FM: It was basically, you know, trying to make money. And I forgot what I got paid, fifty cents an hour (chuckles) or whatever. I guess my first job was working for a furniture company, baby furniture on Beretania Street. I think it was called Babyland, just delivering furniture. So the boss would say, take this crib and deliver it to such-and-such an address and set it up. So I would do that.

One experience I had that I remember, I think one of the first times that I did that, you know, I was kind of nervous. I was putting the—I think it was either a playpen or a crib—together, setting it up. And I think I did something wrong, I (don't remember) exactly what, I either damaged the furniture or scratched the floor, or something. (Chuckles) So anyway, the boss got a complaint about my performance. And, well, I knew that I had goofed, but he was very kind. He didn't bawl me out, he just said, well, next time be careful. So that was kind of a—I remember it, I haven't thought about it in years, but when it happened I was very nervous, I expected to be fired but he said no, we all make mistakes, be careful the next time. And that was it. [He] was a *Haole* guy. Was a good experience.

And Hawaiian Pine[apple Co.], what did I do? Oh, I worked as a grease monkey in a garage there, which meant that, you know, most of my friends were working in the factory, side by side, having fun, and I was by myself in this (chuckles) garage taking the company cars, putting them on the rack and greasing it. And then the next year I was a truck driver, but just inside the plant. You know when you take the pineapple, cut the skin off, they chop it [i.e., the skin] up and roast it and use it as cattle feed. They called it pineapple bran. So there's a place where they do that, and the hot roasted bran comes out, and it's packed in 100-pound bags. It's a burlap bag and they sew it up—and then the big guys—because I was skinny and small—would take that and toss it into the truck. And my job was to—I would help sew it up and then I'd drive the truck to another place and people would unload. And that was my second Hawaiian Pine job. So even though I think I made more money than my friends, I was very envious because all these guys were having fun. Especially, you know, you go to work and the guys are trying to make a date with the girls, having lunch together and I'm here all by myself with basically adults. But I think I made more money than they did.

MK: So you were envious of the tray boys then?

FM: Yes, sure. They were having a lot of fun and mine was, you know, as a grease monkey you're

doing the same thing, pump the grease.

WN: It seems like that experience that you just shared with us and I think later when you get into the war, you talked about your 442nd [Regimental Combat Team] experience as sort of being separate . . .

FM: Yes.

WN: . . . from the crowd, and then some of your experiences at McKinley, same thing. Is that something that you sought or . . .

FM: Oh no, no, no.

WN: . . . was it in the cards for you to be sort of little bit off the mainstream?

FM: I must have been strange, but.

(Laughter)

FM: I had good friends. When my friends would be playing basketball or something, or handball at the park in Kaka'ako, even though I enjoyed that—and frankly I wasn't good at it—but I also enjoyed reading so sometimes they'd come and get me, and I would say well, I'm reading so I'll join you guys later, and never make it. So, I don't know, I guess I liked things that. . . I don't know, it just happened. I didn't seek it by any means because I enjoyed my friends and I enjoyed having fun.

MK: When you got the job as grease monkey, did you get it because you already had some familiarity with auto mechanics . . .

FM: No, no, no.

MK: . . . or service station work?

FM: No, no. I had an older cousin who worked for Hawaiian Pine and he got that job for me. No, not my cousin, my cousin's husband. He had something to do with either my getting the job or getting the assignment. And, as I said, I think it was seen as a choice assignment for a high school kid.

MK: You're making more money and . . .

FM: He thought he was doing me a favor, I think.

(Laughter)

WN: Was working in the saimin stand an option at that time?

FM: Well, it's something that I did on weekends, it was in addition to what I did.

WN: Did you look at that as a way to make money or was it more to help out your parents and sisters?

FM: Well, both in that, you know, in Japanese style whatever paycheck you get or pay envelope you get, go home and give it to your mother. So it didn't result in money in my pocket.

WN: The Hawaiian Pine money went to your mother?

FM: Oh yes, everything. And my sisters', too. When they left high school and went to work, they didn't establish their own bank account or anything. Everything went into the family pot.

MK: So if you needed money for an activity, just go to Mom?

FM: Yes. I thought everybody did that. (Chuckles) I didn't know (the difference) until I was fifty-two.

(Laughter)

FM: I still give everything to Amy, my wife.

(Laughter)

WN: I'm wondering, your nickname is "Fudge." When did you start getting that name? I mean, first of all, did you have a nickname at all in high school?

FM: Yes, "Fudge."

WN: Oh.

FM: In grade school, basically because my name is Fujio and it's—either they'd call me "Fuj" which kind of became. . . . But also, I guess they used to call me "Fudge." But living in Kaka'ako and spending a fair amount of time at the beach, I was really (dark). I'm dark now but nothing compared to what it was then. So they used to call me "Chocolate Fudge."

(Laughter)

FM: So anyway, I've had the name (ever) since I can remember. My sisters call me that, my mother used to call me "Fu-*chan*." I know what my father called me, "Fujio," like that [in a stern voice].

(Laughter)

MK: In that tone of voice.

FM: Right.

MK: During those years in high school, while you have these part-time jobs, give money to your mom, how was the family business doing?

FM: The saimin stand was doing well. It was a family business, my father had done some other work but eventually gave that up to devote full time to the saimin stand. So it was good. It raised our family out of debt and out of poverty into basically middle class. But, as I said earlier, it wasn't just the saimin stand because although I didn't contribute to that except for

services-in-kind, you know, my making saimin, but my sisters who would work during the day and then help out at night. And as I said, everything went into the same pot. So by the end of the war, they [parents] were able to buy a home in Kaimukī. Oh, I'm sorry, not by the end of the war, by the time I came home from graduate school, they were able to buy a home in Kaimukī.

MK: They really worked hard, then.

FM: Oh yes. Saimin was ten cents a bowl, you know. But everything was cheap, relatively, in those times so they did okay.

MK: You were saying that you graduated in 1942, so you were still at McKinley when war broke out.

FM: Right.

MK: So when war broke out, how did it affect your years at McKinley?

FM: Well first of all, it interrupted it for several (weeks). Let's see, I guess we had an abbreviated second semester. So in between we worked for the [U.S. Army] Corps of Engineers out at Fort DeRussy, as I recall. We used to do hand labor. We used to go up to Round Top, no, Makiki Heights to get gravel and dirt that we had to bring down for others to use to make camouflage, gun emplacements, and things like that. All physical labor, and we were okay, you know, we were young and more muscles than brain (chuckles) at that stage. But that's because schools were closed. After a while, the schools were reorganized and reopened. See, Punahou School [campus], as I recall, was taken over by the [U.S. Army] Corps of Engineers, and Saint Louis High School was also used for something. So we shared facilities, as I recall, with Saint Louis High School. And some of our students were reassigned, I guess to balance the load, to Kaimukī High School. And, of course, some of our classmates never came back when school reopened because they found work in some defense work or something and decided to continue that. So there was a very severe change. I don't recall that we lost any teachers to the draft. But we did do what we could to get by. And of course, we had the blackout still at that time. So there were no evening functions at all. So if you were going to have a student body dance or something, it was during the day. (Chuckles)

MK: You mentioned that you worked for the [U.S. Army] Corps of Engineers. Was that volunteer work or paid work?

FM: No, we got paid. That (was) the patriotic thing to do, and they were recruiting, so I went to sign up. You remember the song, "U.S.E.D. Suckers Every Day"? That's what it was.

(Laughter)

MK: So you worked for the [U.S. Army] Corps of Engineers.

FM: Just for a couple of months.

MK: And you also mentioned that some of your classmates didn't come back. They worked for civilian defense . . .

FM: Or something.

MK: Was that an option for you? Did you ever consider that?

FM: No. The thought never crossed my mind.

MK: And then when you came back and resumed classes the student body kind of changed, right, population was changed because some have left, some have come in. How were the classes?

FM: The classes were smaller and abbreviated because we had the morning, and Saint Louis had the afternoon. So we shared the facility but not at the same time. I mean, they didn't join our classes. But most of my friends came back.

WN: Let me turn. . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: War was a, you might say, an inconvenience. I hate to put it that way, but we wanted to finish our high school education. It affected the way we were able to do that. But for some people, for example, those who left high school to go to work, it was a major change. For us it was a short pause and an inconvenience.

MK: So with that interruption in your studies and the short-term class day, how was the content, what you were learning, affected?

FM: Well, must have been okay. As I said, it didn't hinder my entry at the University [of Hawai'i]. I took all the advanced math that I wanted: geometry, solid geometry, trigonometry, spherical trig. They were all offered. Because December 7 was near the end of the first semester. That was abbreviated. But as I recall, the second semester wasn't—well, if the teacher left off anything, you know, we weren't aware of it. I'm sure she must have. So it was okay.

MK: How did the war affect your family? They're issei.

FM: Well, of course, my parents were very, very concerned because we had friends who were, being in Kaka'ako there were a lot of people in the fishing industry, fishermen. I think most of them were relocated. I guess the government didn't want Japanese citizens in boats and radios being out in the, you know, patrolling the coast of the islands. Understandable. So most of them, their homes were raided and things were confiscated, you know, communications, radio. And they were sent to the relocation camps. My father had for a short time been a newspaper reporter. This part I'm a little vague on, but he must have gone back to Japan. When my grandfather died, he must have taken his ashes, *o-kotsu*, to Japan. So he'd been back to Japan since he came. And I think some of those people were also put into the relocation camps. So they were concerned about whether or not he would go. We weren't so much concerned that we would all go unless we chose to do so. In those cases where people were sent away, some went, just the men, and others the whole family went. But fortunately for us, nothing happened.

MK: Did government agents ever come to check on your family?

FM: Not to my knowledge. Certainly, nobody talked to me. To my knowledge we were just one of a couple of hundred thousand Japanese. My parents were Japanese nationals and most of us were dual citizens at that point. But it didn't affect us once that crisis was over and seeing that the family would not be disrupted or separated. Then again, it was making a living. The saimin stand, we couldn't operate at night so it was just a day operation.

MK: During that time, I know that some businesses had difficulties in getting supplies. How about the saimin stand?

FM: I'm sure they had difficulty, but I was away then. I was in the [U.S.] Army. Things were rationed, of course, foodstuff were rationed. But I guess they were able to get enough to continue their business.

Did I tell you about the quartermaster? In the same block [on Cooke Street] there was a Fuji Sake Brew[ing, Co., Ltd.]. And the quartermaster took over that brewery and used that, I guess, as a supply depot. And the soldiers there used to come and eat saimin for lunch. And my mother would cook for them, on the theory that she wanted to be nice to these soldiers so that wherever I was on the Mainland, that they'd be nice to me. So she used to cook, even though food was hard to get, she would make things for them, more than just a bowl of saimin. So they really liked my mother. And so they would bring things for her from the. . . .

(Laughter)

WN: Oh, they would bring military surplus from the. . . .

FM: Yeah, you know. . . .

WN: . . . groceries and. . . .

MK: Food.

FM: My sister was telling me this story long time ago, that they would say, "Oh, Mama-san, would you like some cheese?" You couldn't get any.

So she said, "Yes, if you can we'd appreciate a little."

And they'd bring one of these big, round ones. "Here is the cheese."

(Laughter)

FM: She said, "We can't eat that much." You know, Japanese don't eat very much cheese, right. But anyway, things like that.

(Laughter)

FM: So after the war, some of them used to send Christmas cards and (postcards). My mother was nice, she was very gregarious, very friendly and very. . . . She loved doing things for people.

WN: I would imagine her English probably was getting pretty good, then.

FM: No.

WN: No? Because there was all this contact with people and soldiers, and so forth.

FM: She was not bashful about trying to communicate, (but) her English was really atrocious. But she made herself understood, and (she) understood enough of what they were saying. So while her English was not good at all, she was able to communicate. Whereas my father, who was very shy, especially contact with non-Japanese, he would hardly say a word. You know, just stand around and smile.

WN: You were done with Japanese[-language] school then by the time the war . . .

FM: No.

WN: Oh, you still were going to Japanese[-language] school?

FM: Yeah, I was a senior and that would have been my last year because Chūō Gakuin went through high school (only).

WN: So that closed down?

FM: Yes.

WN: How did you feel about that?

FM: Well, I guess my concern was mostly for the teachers because they're the ones who were rounded up. And later on, as it turned out, although we didn't have any personal financial interest in it, the properties were—Chūō Gakuin had an upper school and a lower school. The lower school was on Nu'uanu Avenue, Nu'uanu Street at that time. The upper, the 'Iolani School was in Nu'uanu at that time, we were adjacent to it. And I don't know who made the decision, but eventually they lost the property. I don't know, whoever made the decision made a poor decision. But when the school was closed, I guess my primary concern about that was what would happen to our teachers. Because they were Japanese nationals, they were rounded up. I guess some of them may have even been sent back to Japan.

WN: But of your Japanese studies ceasing at that time, that didn't bother you too much?

FM: No. You just accept it.

MK: With your parents being issei, what thoughts did they share with you about the war?

FM: Well, I think they were shocked, as I was, that the Japanese air force, or the navy, was attacking Pearl Harbor. That particular Sunday, I was out at Mother Waldron Park with two or three other friends, and we were just shooting baskets. And then, I heard all that commotion and the smoke, and saw planes overhead but way up. And we remarked, talking among ourselves saying, "Gee, don't they know it's so early in the morning?" I thought it was around eight o'clock or so. But anyway, how come they're holding maneuvers on Sunday morning and disturbing everybody? And then much later, like maybe ten o'clock or so, my sister, who

had gone to work at the [*Honolulu*] *Advertiser*, came to get me and said I'd better come home because there's a war, and said, "Japan is attacking Pearl Harbor."

So I told her, "That can't be. Because they're negotiating right now in Washington [D.C.], so why would they attack us?"

She said she was at the *Advertiser* building and they were sent home because one of the, what they thought at that time was a bomb, fell nearby. As it turned out it was one of these anti-aircraft (shells) that came back down and exploded. But they thought they were under fire, so they closed down the place and they sent the employees home. And since I wasn't home, she was sent out to find me and bring me home.

As soon as I was satisfied it was the Japanese, in fact, attacking Pearl Harbor, then the concern was, gee, what's going to happen to us. And more so our parents because they're Japanese nationals. So there was a question, until that question was indirectly answered by nobody coming to get us, or get them, there was always that worry what's going to happen. But there was never any doubt as to which side our loyalty belonged. Even my parents, who had come many, many years ago, said to us, "This is your country." And for them it is their adopted country, so we have to do whatever is right as U.S. citizens. That's why when I volunteered, I think maybe they half expected it. Being an only son, I think they were very fearful of what could happen. But there was no attempt to dissuade me and say, "No, don't do that. Don't fight against your parents' country," or anything like that, no. All they said was, "If that's your decision, it's okay. Be careful." So it certainly was complicated for them, and complicated for us. But there was, I guess, nothing you could do. You couldn't go overtly and do anything about it, so we just waited for developments. And when that didn't happen and when the opportunity came, I volunteered.

MK: How did you decided to volunteer for the 442[nd Regimental Combat Team]? You volunteered in March '43.

FM: Yes. By then, of course, I was at the University [of Hawai'i]. I was on campus when I learned that they were recruiting for the 442nd. So I just signed up. It's not something that I had discussed with my friends or discussed with my family. I knew the indignities that the Triple V [i.e., Varsity Victory Volunteers] people suffered and the injustice of that. So when the opportunity came, I said, well, I'm going to sign up. Then I went home and told my parents that I did that. I'm sure it was a shock because I didn't discuss it with them first and say, well, what do you think I should do, because I guess it was clear to me what I should do. So I didn't really ponder it, you know, what should I do, what are my responsibilities to my family? I just felt that, well, as a young man, I was, what, eighteen at that time. I was eligible so like a good American, you ought to do it. And especially for a Japanese American. I did believe that we had something to prove.

MK: So you signed up for the 442 . . .

FM: Yes.

MK: . . . and then what happened?

FM: Well, we got herded into cattle cars and sent out to Schofield [Barracks]. Let's see, I don't remember too much about what happened right after I signed up, but eventually I ended up in

uniform at the ['Iolani] Palace grounds where they had this big ceremony. And from there we were sent to the O'ahu Railway [& Land, Co.] station, and from there we were put on these trains and shipped out to Schofield. And just waited to be transshipped to the Mainland for training.

MK: How long were you at Schofield?

FM: Not very long. I don't remember, I guess a matter of a month. We didn't (receive) any training, we were just waiting to be shipped out. The only thing that happened while at Schofield was, I guess we were given all the shots and we were given (IQ) tests, and then issued whatever supplies we needed. We had a duffle bag full of stuff. And when the time came, we went to the pier. I guess maybe we learned how to march or something (chuckles). When we went to board the troop ships, of course, all the families were there and very emotional scenes all over the place. But it was also very festive. Because young men, what do they know?

(Laughter)

FM: I guess that's the time we went to. . . . I'm confused here, I don't know whether that's when we went to the palace grounds before we shipped out or when we were inducted and went to Schofield. But anyway, there was something at the palace grounds.

MK: I think I've seen photographs of that. The famous photograph. So you were at Schofield for maybe about a month, then you were sent off to basic training?

FM: Yes, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Camp Shelby.

MK: At Hattiesburg, how was the experience?

FM: Oh, again, it's a mixture of good times and hard times—I wouldn't say bad times, hard times. The training was very difficult because I'm not a very physical person. To go through the training and the marches and all that stuff was hard work for me. But I was with friends, couple of them I'd known from Japanese[-language] school, Kaka'ako Japanese[-language] School, they were in the same outfit. And others I became good friends with. I was assigned to the 232nd [Combat] Engineer [Company]. We were a small group, relatively. So we became close, had a lot of fun together, worked out together, you know, a lot of pride in what we do. Some of my friends liked to go on weekend passes and go drink beer or something. I don't drink, so I didn't enjoy those things. I went to Hattiesburg maybe once or twice, but it wasn't something that I really looked forward to doing. But some of them would get into fights with not only some of the civilians there but some of the soldiers. We were sort of in a group by ourselves, the whole regiment, so I didn't encounter any of those kinds of problems. You might say my new experience there was getting to know some *kotonks* . . .

(Laughter)

FM: . . . there. In particular, the captain of the 232nd was a Japanese American from Nebraska. And I remember thinking, boy, I don't like this guy.

(Laughter)

FM: Because I'm used to the Hawaiian style, you know, friendly and you don't recognize rank. But this guy was very spit and polish, very proper. His second-in-command was also a *kotonk* but he was more human. So my experience with Mainland Japanese Americans was limited to those few people, but was kind of mixed. And I did discover that they didn't think like us or behave like us. But over time those differences went away. Now, when we have our reunions here, Captain Nakata, who went back to, I think, Lincoln, Nebraska and became—he was an engineer already—and went back into his engineering practice. But he comes (to reunions) and they joke about what a stuffed shirt he was.

(Laughter)

FM: So the 232nd experience was good. I learned that dynamite and I are incompatible. Being part of the combat engineers, you learn how to blow up bridges and stuff so you got to work with explosives. I actually handled dynamite just maybe two or three times. But it gave me terrible, piercing headaches for hours. I suppose you outgrow that, but it was very unpleasant, I mean physically unpleasant. Of course, it was dangerous too, but the stuff gets on your hand, and after a while, I don't know what it is, the chemical affects me by giving me a terrible headache.

MK: Were there others that kind of experienced those types of symptoms, too?

FM: I think so, but I don't remember. But you don't complain about those things, everybody's got aches and pains so you just take an aspirin or something.

MK: So the 232nd Engineers, was that their primary responsibility?

FM: We learned how to build bridges. We were called combat engineers because we operate in the combat zone. So, say, if the infantry has to cross a river, they call on the combat engineers to come and build a pontoon bridge for them, or something. Or if a bridge is knocked out, you have to repair that bridge. And often when a bridge is knocked out by the enemy, that's because they don't want you to come across. And when you try to fix it they shoot at you. (Laughs) So it's a dangerous operation. Or if we have to, say, withdraw and we don't want them to cross over, then we have to go out and blow up the bridges. That's the kind of job we had. So you learned how to do that. Of course, we would practice building bridges—not over actual rivers but go over a dry gulch and build it as if there was water running, and things like that.

MK: I have in my notes here that you went to basic training, then you ended up at an engineering school for specialized training in Alabama, but the training program terminated after one semester. So did this time at the engineering school happen before you were assigned to the . . .

FM: No, it was during. You see, I joined in March '43 and then we went over to Camp Shelby, I don't know, April–May sort of time frame. And in November, somebody called me from company headquarters and told me that I'd been assigned to this army specialized training program. I didn't know anything about it, so I said, "What's this about?"

They said, "Well, here's your orders. You gotta go over there."

And I remember that I missed out on a Thanksgiving turkey dinner because they shipped me

out on Thanksgiving Day.

(Laughter)

FM: What an insensitive thing to do, right?

(Laughter)

FM: So here on Thanksgiving Day I'm shipped out to a strange place. From Camp Shelby, Mississippi, I must have taken a bus or something, I don't know how I got there, but I went to the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi as kind of a gathering place where soldiers from different parts of the country were assembled. We stayed there for, I don't know, a couple of weeks. From there I was sent to [Alabama] Polytechnic Institute, what is now Auburn University. We studied engineering for basically a semester or a quarter or something, a short time. So this was by then (early) 1944. And I guess—when was D day?

WN: June 6, 1944.

FM: Well, anyway, I guess they were getting ready for that. (About that time) they decided they needed soldiers not students, so that program was terminated, at least for those of us who were just starting.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MK: You were just saying that they stopped your course of study, right?

FM: I think we finished the quarter and then terminated it there.

MK: And at that point, what happened to you?

FM: Well, this was happening all over the country. Our group was sent to Camp Atterbury, Indiana, and there were other groups that joined us. Then the army went through some kind of a screening process and formed new units, or assigned the people to different existing units. I was assigned to a new group that was being formed at that time. Several similar organizations were formed. It's called the Field Artillery Observation Battalion. It's kind of a technical (unit). The job of that outfit was to provide information to our artillery on their location as well as (the target's) location. So let's say, if you had an artillery piece that can shoot ten miles, of course, you can't see your target. So you (have) to do everything by calculation, and that means you have to know where you are. You have to know where the target is, then you can calculate (the direction and trajectory), and then shoot at it. So our job, say if we're in Germany, for example, and you're driving a truck and you have this big gun and you park the truck and you set the gun down, you don't know where you are. So you can't shoot (chuckles) if you don't know where you are. So our job was to provide information to the corps, which is several divisions. We were part of the corps artillery, so we had the really big guns. And we would provide them with survey information and give them the exact coordinates of what we called monuments. So let's say we have a (monument marked) with a cross. If you put your gun over this (cross, you know) exactly where that gun is so you know how to point it. So anyway, our job was to furnish that kind of information. Well, there were dozens if not hundreds of these big guns so we (couldn't provide all the monuments needed). So what we did was provide what we called control points, a few critical strategic points where they would

know exactly what the position is. Then the division artillery, I mean, then their own survey groups would come in and establish points taking off from (the control points). So we really provided all the basic control points for the artillery both at the corps level, which is the biggest guns, and then the division artillery which is the next. And then, the 522nd Field Artillery [Battalion] would be lower than that, (with) the shorter-range (pieces) because (they're) closer to the front. Unless you can see and you're shooting just by sight, you have to know where you are. So that's one (part).

The other part is the target, or where (the shell has to land. The trouble is that the target may not be visible to the artillery if it's too far or behind a hill.) By working off these control points, we used trigonometry to locate these (targets exactly on the map. Then the artillery would calculate the trajectory of the shell to hit the target and fire. If the shell misses the target, we determine the exact point of impact on the map and relay the information to the artillery. An adjustment is made and another round is fired, et cetera). Our outfit had these observers (that provided this information.) Now, these guys are out in the front line so that's a dangerous job. (When the target is) bracketed, (we'd) say, "Okay, fire away." So it takes a little mathematics and trigonometry to work it out. So anyway, that's the kind of outfit that I was assigned to.

MK: Did you ever imagine that all your math skills would be used for this purpose?

FM: No, not really. Not when I joined, I had no idea what I was going to be assigned to.

MK: So actually you were sort of like in a forward party, then.

FM: Yes, we had people killed or captured, things like that.

MK: And you mentioned the, is it 522?

FM: Yes.

MK: Later on you became partner with Shimazu. Is that the same Mr. Shimazu that was in the 522?

FM: Yes. But Don and I became partners because we went to the same school, Rose Poly [i.e., Rose Polytechnic Institute]. Anyway, he's from Maui and I really got to know him in Indiana when we were going to school.

MK: I'm also curious, what rank did you eventually achieve in the military?

FM: Staff sergeant. I had no aspirations.

(Laughter)

FM: But I was made staff sergeant. And I was the only Asian, the rest were all *Haoles* and some of them were much older. I was by then, I guess, nineteen, and had guys that were thirty-something years old, and others my age from all over the country: Kentucky, Oklahoma, Texas, Michigan, Boston [Massachusetts], Florida. It was a real chop suey. And they made me staff sergeant.

(Laughter)

FM: But we were okay, I mean, they all became good friends of mine.

WN: Shall we stop here?

MK: Okay, let's stop here.

WN: Stop here and then . . .

MK: Yeah, I want to make sure that we . . .

WN: . . . finish up the war period next time.

MK: Yeah, so we would have gotten you into North Germany.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-18-3-96

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

September 18, 1996

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the University of Hawai'i presidents oral history project. Today is Wednesday, September 18, 1996 and we're at his office in Mānoa O'ahu. The interviewers are Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto and Warren Nishimoto.

MK: This is the third session in our series. And during the last session we were talking about your World War II days, and we were discussing your assignment to the Field Artillery Observation Battalion . . .

FM: Right.

MK: . . . and work of that unit. Now, when you were with that unit, where were you sent, which countries?

FM: Oh, we left Boston then went to England for staging and then we landed at Cherbourg, France. That's close to where the Normandie beachhead was. So we were there for about a month, as I recall, because our equipment got lost in South Hampton. So we had to send somebody back there to find our equipment. In the meantime we were pulling train guard duty, just riding in the trains with the supplies. (Supplies, sometimes by carloads, were being stolen.) After the equipment was finally all assembled, we moved out. We went north from there to northern France, northern Germany, and then finally ended up way up north. We were in Holland for just a little bit. (Incidentally, the lost equipment episode saved our lives, because a unit like ours which arrived after us was sent ahead in our place. That unit was ambushed by the Germans and suffered heavy casualties in the so-called Malmedy Massacre.)

MK: So you were in England, France . . .

FM: Basically France and Germany.

MK: . . . and eventually you went up to Holland, too.

FM: Yes, but it was just sort of passing through. We were headed up north.

MK: You mentioned that some men were killed or injured, and I was wondering if you experienced any close calls?

FM: Yes. We were shot at (many times), but the time that the person that I knew—we were in the same group—got killed, we were shelled by the Germans. We got caught in a building that was shelled. We took cover in the basement, and you could hear (and feel) shells come in and (hit) the building. After the shelling was over, when we went out of the building, we found out that one of our guys was hit in the doorway and he was buried under the rubble. I didn't see him at first, but I stepped on something soft. I looked and [it] was the jeep driver for the lieutenant who was in charge of our platoon. That was, I guess, the closest I've come personally. But others were hurt and, you know, I didn't get a scratch. We had a couple of guys who were captured. But I must say, though, that the kind of work we did, although we were in the front lines, we weren't actually shooting at the enemy soldiers or certainly no hand-to-hand combat. It was dangerous enough but nothing like being in the infantry.

MK: How did you feel? You know that some of your friends and coworkers were being injured or killed and you were in danger sometimes. How did you feel?

FM: Well, you know, death was always near. Because as we advanced, we could see dead German soldiers all over the place. In some of the rural areas you'd see farm animals that were dead. So death is something that you accept, but when you're young, you don't think it's gonna happen to you, right? But we all knew that it was a very dangerous situation. But I guess we felt sort of invincible, that nothing's gonna happen to me. And I would say that applied to everyone as far as I could tell. Everybody took precautions, they didn't take foolish chances but nobody, say, refused to do something because it's dangerous. They did what they had to do, but tried to do it carefully.

MK: I think I've heard other veterans say similar things. Because they were so youthful, they felt that they'll come back.

FM: Yes. I never thought that I wasn't gonna make it. Quite the contrary, I always thought that I was gonna go (home) and go back to my old life.

MK: Because you folks were doing all the calculations to set up the guns and everything, how did you feel about your actually being, or being partially responsible for causing property damage or for contributing to the killing of, you know, the enemy?

FM: You know, I didn't have any hesitation or second thoughts. I volunteered to serve in the [U.S.] Army. I truly believed that [Adolf] Hitler was an evil influence in the world, not just toward the Americans or the allies but in his own country as well, and that he had to be stopped. Of course, thankful to say, I didn't have to kill anyone directly, (chuckles) with my own gun and my own hand, although I knew that we were aiding in that process. But I didn't have any misgivings about my role. And I tried to do the best job I could.

MK: And I know you mentioned that you rose to be staff sergeant, and you were nineteen years old.

FM: That's not much.

(Laughter)

FM: My friends became lieutenants and captains.

(Laughter)

MK: Well still, as staff sergeant you are still responsible for other people and you delegate or give orders. How did you feel about sort of being responsible, giving orders, managing?

FM: Well, I did feel a responsibility which sounds kind of silly, because I was among the youngest of my troops. Because I was directing their work up front, we went out in these small groups that I was in charge of. So if anyone got hurt or, God forbid, got killed, I'd be responsible for that. So I felt a very strong responsibility that these friends of mine—I didn't think of them as my subordinates, I thought of them as my friends—that my friends' welfare was in my custody. So I was serious about that. And also, it was up to me that we achieve the mission. When we'd go out into a certain area to get some work done, it was up to me that it was done, that we didn't go someplace and hide or goof off or make mistakes. And occasionally there'd be some problems that we had to solve. So when we were out working, I didn't feel any hesitancy about ordering people. But when we were not doing the survey work we just fooled around. We were friends. We weren't very militarylike.

(Laughter)

MK: Did you folks have any conversations about home, about Hawai'i?

FM: Yes, because I was of course, the only one from Hawai'i. These people were from all over the country. So we talked not only about Hawai'i but about their hometowns, too. We had hillbillies from West Virginia, and we had (a couple from Mississippi. One) ended up being a riverboat captain (going) up and down the Mississippi [River]. We had some coal miners from Pennsylvania, all over. We talked about life back home, so it was a great experience for me. I got to know these men, made friends, but also got a taste of what this great country of ours is like, the great diversity. You know, we in Hawai'i think of *Haole* as sort of homogeneous, right? And I found that they're so different. And I was no more different from them than they are from each other.

MK: So was that the first time that you ever had that sort of consciousness?

FM: Yes. You know, I went to McKinley [High School] where—I think I mentioned—I had Chinese friends, and some Korean friends, but mostly Japanese. And when I was at Pohukaina [Elementary School], I had some Hawaiian, Portuguese friends. But they were all local. (Chuckles) And so you sort of accept that. But when I went into the army and then lived and worked with these guys, I was basically in a foreign culture. It's not like the people that live in Hawai'i that come from different cultural backgrounds. Mainland culture is quite different from Hawai'i culture. Until then I had really no understanding of the Mainland *Haoles* and their culture, how different they are depending on what part of the country they come from, but also within that, the different socioeconomic background. (About) how much commonality there was among all these different people. (Put) a bunch of guys together, they can live and work together. I met (a couple of Jewish people) for the first time, one from New York and one from New Jersey. I became good friends with one and not so good friends with the other (chuckles), but not because they were Jew[ish] and I was Japanese or whatever, but because of the kind of (individuals) they were. What I learned there was without consciously thinking about it, that this country has such diversity and yet so much that drew us together. So we made---we became friends as I said.

- MK:** Having met these men from all different parts of the United States coming from different backgrounds, socioeconomic and ethnicitywise, did that experience in any way change the way you looked at Hawai'i and the people here?
- FM:** I think so. Not so much looking inward to Hawai'i, but thinking of Hawai'i and the rest of the United States or even the rest of the world. Sometimes among locals, you know, you "*talk stink*" about *Haoles* and (others). I've never felt that. Because of my personal experience and the way I was treated in the army and thereafter when I went to school at Rose Poly[technic Institute] and then I went to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology], I've learned that people really—or maybe I'm fortunate or maybe I was kind of oblivious to what was happening around me—but I've never felt that people were discriminating against me. To be sure, there's curiosity, but I experienced the same sort of thing when I went to China. When we first went to China there were dozens or maybe hundreds of people gathered around because they'd [never] seen foreigners, even though we were Asians. Some of them actually came (chuckles) and touched you. And so if I go to—say, when I was at Terre Haute, Indiana going to school—by then, of course I'd gone through the war—people kind of stare at you because they don't see too many Asians there. But it doesn't bother me. I didn't say, well, the guy is giving me the *stink eye* or anything like that. You see, the guy's curious. Doesn't see too many Asians around here. So I think in that respect maybe it broadened me, perhaps more than, say, others who may not have had the same kind of experience that I had.
- MK:** Also during the war years, I guess you probably were receiving a lot of letters from home, from your family.
- FM:** Yeah, oh yeah.
- MK:** What reports did you get from back home?
- FM:** Oh, just family talk, small talk. What my sisters are doing, how the saimin business is doing. My mother and her friends from the quartermaster depot that I told you about. All little talk. I think they just wanted to keep my morale up. (Chuckles)
- MK:** And how did they fare during the war, the family and the business?
- FM:** I think the business did very well. I know my mother was always worried about my well-being, and I'm sure my sisters were, too, and my father. But they never wrote about those things, they just said, take care of yourself and tried to keep the letters cheerful and normal, I think. I know that my mother used to go to the different temples and churches to pray for my safety. She used to tell me that—after the war—that I came home without a scratch because the gods were looking after me, you know. (Chuckles) But the letters from home were always welcomed, you know, so you get the letter, you open it, read it and think about home. And it was kind of lonesome in the sense that although I had good friends, they were not friends from home. It's a little different from having friends from home.
- MK:** And then when the war ended, how did you feel?
- FM:** Well, when the (European) war ended we were sent to southern Germany to calibrate some heavy weapons, cannons, in preparation for them being sent to the Pacific theater. We had been in Europe a relatively short time, compared certainly to, say, the men in the 100th

[Infantry] Battalion, for example, who started their campaigns in North Africa. We came in just after [the Invasion of] Normandie or little after Normandie. So we were there a short time. So we understood that the people who had been there for a long time would be going home, and the younger ones, you know, you gotta go over to the Pacific theater. So my initial thought was, well, this war isn't going to end, for us anyway, until we win the war in the Pacific. But fortunately, on August something, I forget which day it was, but when the Nagasaki [atomic] bomb was dropped [August 9, 1945], of course, peace was declared right after that, so I could go home.

But I remember the first atom bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima [August 6, 1945], we received the news—we were then in this firing range calibrating these big guns. And I heard about the atom bomb, and I remember thinking that that event was going to change the world. That when you unleash the secret of the atom, you know, the huge forces that are holding these atoms so tightly together, and then when you're able to release all that energy, transform that, that was going to lead to not just ending the war, but it was going to change the whole world. I didn't know too much about atomic energy, but I knew enough that that was an unimaginable accomplishment, scientific technological accomplishment. And then, what, couple of [days] later they dropped another one and the war ended. Otherwise, (chuckles) I'd have been shipped to Southeast Asia or someplace.

MK: So at that point, then, were you shipped back to the U.S.?

FM: Yes, well, when the war ended and everybody started counting points, you know, "How many points do you have?" (Chuckles) And my case, almost from the day I enlisted I was earning double points for overseas service. Because all the time in Camp Shelby was considered overseas because we were from Hawai'i, right? And, of course, when you go to Europe that's overseas. So the rest of my friends, let's say if they joined the same time, were pulling domestic duty until we went overseas. So I think I was the first one from my outfit to be told, "You can go home."

(Laughter)

FM: So I got separated from them, and we went to—gee, I forget. Went to kind of a staging area where people with enough points were all being brought together and then shipped home. I don't remember how I got home except that I went to the West Coast. Must have gone by ship to the East Coast, then by train (to California), and then by ship back to Hawai'i. Yes, I shipped out of California. I was so happy to go home.

(Laughter)

FM: I didn't care how I went home.

MK: I was wondering, nowadays when we've been celebrating the different anniversaries of the end of the war, people talk a lot about the nisei veterans, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team]. And as a nisei veteran, what do you see as a nisei veteran's role or contribution in World War II?

FM: Well, militarily, of course, the 442 and the 100th [Infantry Battalion] were superb organizations in terms of what they accomplished. And that's not because niseis were better

fighting men or better soldiers, but I think they were more committed. They had a purpose. Over and above fighting the war, they had a purpose. So I think that's what made them more effective. I don't think they were braver or more fanatic or anything, but I think they knew the job that had to be done. That winning the war in Europe was a way of winning the war back home. Because, you know, as I said, I was young and naive and didn't experience some of the personal things that happened to some of them. But the larger question of social justice in Hawai'i, of the immigrants versus the ruling plantation-based society in Hawai'i, I think that was felt strongly by especially, I think, people in the 100th [Infantry] Battalion because they were older. And some of the older guys who went into the 442nd who were, say, the upperclassmen at the University [of Hawai'i] and who wanted to volunteer, who were in the ROTC [Reserve Officer Training Corps] and then they were treated like they were enemy aliens, I think those people felt it a lot more, say, than I did. Because I came out of high school, went one semester and then joined the [U.S.] Army. So even though I understood the principle involved, it's not the same as—you don't feel it in your bones. You know, you feel it up here, intellectually, but not really in your bones. But I think as a nisei, as a part of that movement, I think the 442nd and 100th did a fantastic job. It changed the history of these islands. Changed the history of the United States. And you know, I take very, very, very little credit for that because, as I said, I was off by myself. But I think if the 442nd wasn't formed, or formed and had not distinguished itself, I think the future of Asians, not just Japanese Americans in our country, might have been different. I think given [Dr.] Martin Luther King, [Jr.] and all that, [it] would eventually have happened anyway, perhaps, but I think it came faster for us because of the 442nd and the 100th.

MK: You mentioned Hawaii's plantation-based society with the ruling group. I know that you didn't have personal experience—you didn't grow up on a plantation. But how much of a consciousness did you have about that situation in the islands?

FM: Growing up, I didn't think very much about any injustice. I understood that we were poor, I understood my parents were immigrants from Japan and, therefore, couldn't earn very much money. I didn't feel that they were being deliberately suppressed or held down economically and otherwise. I think when I went to high school, though, and started learning something about the American government and the principles on which this country was built, I guess my basic feeling was that if we worked hard, and if we could acquire the knowledge and skills, that—I believed what I read in the textbooks—that this was the country of opportunity. I don't think I fully realized that there were forces operating to keep you down. So as I said, I was kind of (chuckles) in a world of my own, I guess, as a young person and not fully appreciating some of the difficulties that others were going through. I guess maybe my parents protected me from that. And if they felt any discrimination or if they had any kind of difficulty, they shielded us from it.

MK: I guess they fostered in you a kind of sense of optimism. You work hard, study hard. . . .

FM: That's basically the message that they drilled into me, that if you study hard then you can succeed. I wasn't told, well, no sense study because you're never going to get up there.

MK: And I know you talked about it a little bit earlier, about being with people from different parts of the U.S. and how you learned about the diversity and how it affected how you looked at Hawai'i a bit. But when you went to Europe, that widened your range, too. How did being in Europe affect you or your outlook?

FM: Well, let's see, of course when we were in Europe, we were just by ourselves. We didn't have very many contacts with civilians, but when you're in Europe you appreciate how old Europe is compared to the U.S., the cities that are thousands of years old. And then you learn how small Europe is, you know. (Chuckles) You think of Belgium or Holland, France, Germany, you think of these sort of in the same scale as the United States, right, the United States, forty-eight states at that time. So Europe is a continent, a continent is big, and you see all these countries. Then, when you're going through some of these places, "What? We went through Holland already?"

(Laughter)

FM: They're really tiny places. And yet there's so much cultural historical differences. So anyway, I guess, again, I didn't really sit down and think seriously about these things. But you know, the impression that you have is that Europe is very crowded, they're different, they're small, very intimate kind of living. It's not---doesn't give you the feeling like, say, being in a large [continent] like North America. It's a small---they call it a continent but it's very small. And again, the diversity of the people is really amazing. So human history---you know, I'm not saying I thought these things at that time, but, say, in retrospect, it's amazing how human societies develop, you know, together. Sometimes against each other, sometimes with each other. Sometimes you start together and you split up, recombine. It's a very, very interesting and very complex social organism. If you think of what's happening in Bosnia, places like that and all the strife. We have been doing that for thousands of years.

WN: When the war ended, you went back to UH [University of Hawai'i] Mānoa for civil engineering. I was just wondering, when you look back at your war experience, do you look at World War II as a turning point in your life where things changed, or do you look at it more as just an interruption or an aberration?

FM: An interruption. I sort of felt that well, I had a job to do, I went there and did it and came home and now I'm going to go back to my life. So being in the army was, as I said, an interruption, interlude. It's something that hasn't had an impact on me as much as maybe some of the people, say for example, in the 442nd. Maybe that's partly because I didn't share the same experiences with them. Of course the biggest impact it had was that it provided me with the financial means of getting my education. But all of the other things gave me a feeling for our country and our people. And I'm sure it prepared me for going forward from there, but my life wasn't built around my service like it did for some people.

MK: So when the war ended, what were your personal plans?

FM: Go home as soon as I could, get out of the army, become a civilian. (WN chuckles.) And some of my friends continued, they joined the reserves or (stayed on). But I had no desire to do that. I'm not a very military person.

(Laughter)

MK: And, like you mentioned that the war thus provided you with the GI Bill [of Rights].

FM: Yeah, that I appreciated very much.

MK: I've never asked anyone before. What did the GI Bill actually provide?

FM: Paid all the [college] tuition, books, and a living allowance—I forget how much it was, wasn't very much, something like sixty-seventy dollars a month. But that took me through 3½ years of undergraduate work and almost all of my graduate school. But at graduate school, I took a research assistantship for the last two years—I was in graduate school for three years—and I took a research assistantship for the last two years, so I had a tuition waiver and earned some money. But at that point whatever I had I could use for books, and the living allowance. And by then I was married, so I think I got ninety bucks a month. (Chuckles) But it basically allowed me to do all of that.

MK: With the GI Bill, could you have gone anywhere?

FM: Yes. Anywhere that would accept me into their program.

MK: Were there any limits in the number of years that you could receive benefits or any monetary limit as to how much you could receive?

FM: Yes. It depended on the number of months of service. So—I forget what the formula was—but people who had, say, been in the army longer had more eligibility than someone who was in it for a shorter time. Of course, that makes sense. And . . .

WN: But were you aware of the benefits of the GI Bill before you came into the military?

FM: Oh no, no.

WN: You weren't conscious of saying . . .

FM: No . . .

WN: . . . oh, if I serve I will get this much . . .

FM: No, it didn't exist when we joined.

WN: Oh, I'm sorry.

FM: It came up after the war was finished and all these young men coming back from the war without jobs and (skills), I guess the government very wisely said, well, we gotta do something with these guys. So why don't we send them to school. But also, I think, many of us interrupted our schooling to get in—to join the army, or (be) drafted. And the government really thought, I think, that we have to rebuild our own country and the way to do it is to provide these people with an opportunity to learn something, some profession—a trade or something.

WN: Let me turn the. . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: The GI Bill and Marshall Plan were the two greatest things that happened as a result of the war.

MK: With the GI Bill you mentioned that you could have gone anywhere. But I noticed that when you came back, you came back to UH Mānoa, civil engineering. Why did you come back to UH Mānoa?

FM: I guess I wanted to come home, because I'd been away for almost three years and wanted to spend some time at home. And I probably would have finished at UH except for the fact that at that time, I felt that the program was not what I wanted. So after two years, I transferred out. Again, if I didn't have the GI Bill, I would have never had that opportunity.

MK: You were saying that the program wasn't what you wanted. In what way was it inadequate for your needs?

FM: Well, they had a very limited faculty at that time. And if I were to continue at the UH I would have taken courses from some faculty that I didn't think were. . . . (Chuckles)

WN: Hard to say?

FM: There was one guy that put me to sleep.

(Laughter)

WN: That's right, you told us about that.

FM: And I said, oh no, if I stay for my junior year I'm going to take three classes from this guy, so I said, I'm out of here.

(Laughter)

FM: Maybe it wasn't his fault because that class was right after lunch.

(Laughter)

WN: Did you notice changes at Mānoa from the time you were there and then, I mean before the war, and then coming back after the war?

FM: No.

MK: I was wondering, you were going to Mānoa, then you joined the army, went to Europe, you were in combat situations, you were under fire and everything, and then you come back to school. Now, how did that experience affect your attitudes towards school, or your habits, or. . . .

FM: I was glad to get back to school. I enjoyed---I guess I enjoy studying. You know, engineering is, a lot of it, most of it is problem solving. And I love to solve problems. So when the war

was finished, I said, okay, well, that's out of the way now, so I went back to what I wanted to do. So I don't think it affected me in any way. I'm sure I was more mature, but my recollection of those days is that I put down my pencil one day, then three years later I picked up my pencil and continued. We fooled around in class. In our college at that time, the engineering school or department (and) the nurses [were] in the same college. It was called, I think, college of applied science. So we tried to get the nurses to go to a picnic so they can bring the food.

(Laughter)

FM: And we did the usual things that college students do. We were a little older, of course. And we must have been more mature. For some people the transition was difficult, I think. But for me it was almost literally, well, I put my pencil down, and then come back, pick it up and, okay, what's my next assignment?

(Laughter)

MK: You mentioned, like, some people that came back were older than the usual student.

FM: Yes.

MK: That's one change in the student body. Did you notice any other changes at UH Mānoa at that time?

FM: Yes, I think veterans, the students who came back who were veterans, did have a definite impact on the campus. Because some of them had gone through some horrible events, experiences in the war. For those 442nd guys that were in the infantry especially, they've seen guys, their friends killed right in front of their eyes and who probably themselves killed the enemy. Some of them anyway. So those kinds of experiences, I think, do change people. So there were veterans that were on campus that were different from, say, kids just coming out of high school. So even though I personally didn't maybe fit that mold, but the UH campus, I think, very definitely was different. And the veterans, I think, added a lot to the campus because they were more mature. I think in many cases these students were kind of docile before they went to the war. But when they came back they were much more self-assured, they were more confident of themselves, of what it was like outside of Hawai'i or outside of the classroom. So I think for them, thanks to them, the university changed. I was kind of a nerd so. . . .

(Laughter)

MK: Another question I have, I don't know how you're going to answer this, the UH president back then was Gregg [M.] Sinclair. Now, as a student did you have any awareness or thoughts about this UH president?

FM: No. I have to look in the history books to find out who the president was (MK laughs) because as a student, I had no interaction. The only people, non-students that I interacted with were, of course, my professors and the highest-level person is the dean, and the dean at that time used to teach. So I knew him as a professor as well as dean. But to me, that's where the university ended and we were in what was then called the engineering quadrangle. And we

just sort of stayed there. Very unliberal.

(Laughter)

FM: But that's not because---that's not the university's fault. That were people like me who kind of had blinders on. I enjoyed mathematics, I enjoyed science so that's what I did. Others who enjoyed student activity or student government got into government and they ran for student senate or officers, whatnot. So the university was a good experience in many respects.

MK: You mentioned that the contact that you would have would be with the professors. Who were some of your more notable professors?

FM: Well the one that I remember most and who probably had the most influence on what I learned is Dr. Kenichi Watanabe. He's a physicist, but at the time he taught mathematics, or we learned mathematics from him. He was a brilliant mathematician—he was a theoretical physicist, and therefore you have to be good in mathematics. He was a Cal Tech [California Institute of Technology] Ph.D., which in those days you really have to be very good to do that. You still have to be very good to do that. I was fortunate that I learned my mathematics from him. He encouraged me to switch to physics instead of engineering. He was, to me, among all the professors I had at the University of Hawai'i, he was the best. Or the most outstanding.

MK: This Dr. Kenichi Watanabe, was he a nisei or. . . .

FM: I think he's a nisei, yes. His sister was my classmate at McKinley. Did I tell you about Frank Hluboky saying, about the test that he gave, only one (student) ever solved the problem? That's him.

MK: So he wasn't that much older than you.

FM: I would guess he was at least ten years . . .

MK: Up from you.

FM: Yes. Very gentle, very soft spoken, a real scholarly type.

MK: Were there others of this caliber back then?

FM: There was another, Shigeru Okubo, but I had only one class from him. And it was kind of elementary—in fact it was a mechanical drawing course, so there wasn't much of an impact on me from him. Then there was Dean [Ernest Charles] Webster. He was dean of the college and he taught a number of those courses as well. And this other (professor) who shall remain nameless.

(Laughter)

WN: He probably has a building named after him.

MK: Actually Warren and I can go back to the office and we can look him up.

(Laughter)

MK: I think every college student has one or two of those profs.

FM: Yes. I think if they were all like Ken I would have stayed. But I think, as I recall—and this is after the war—my first sense of injustice was when Ken Watanabe had to leave UH because—and you know, I didn't fully understand what was going on. And I think by that time I was already gone. But he left the University of Hawai'i [in 1947], as good as he was. And this may be not factually correct, but my impression at that time was that he left because he couldn't get ahead at the University of Hawai'i. So he went to a small college in, I think was Illinois or Indiana [Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana]. And then he ended up working for the [Atmospheric Composition section], Air Force Cambridge [Research Center], and did some very important upper atmosphere physics research for the [U.S.] Air Force. But my recollection at the time was there was some either university politics or discrimination of some sort involved in his case because to me, he clearly was the best mathematics and physics teacher. In fact, I didn't learn physics from him, I learned physics from another professor who was kind of run-of-the-mill, more like a high school physics teacher. But to have a Cal Tech Ph.D. at the university who either had to or chose to leave because he couldn't get ahead, that's a terrible commentary.

MK: And then, I guess, you stayed at the UH for only one year.

FM: Mm, year and a half, I guess.

MK: Year and a half?

FM: Yes. 'Cause I finished my sophomore year, and then left.

MK: And you went to Rose Polytechnic [Institute, today known as Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology]?

FM: Mm hmm [yes].

MK: Why did you choose that particular institution?

FM: Because Purdue. . . .

(Laughter)

FM: I applied to Purdue [University] because I really didn't know very much about good engineering schools. But I had heard of Purdue. So I applied to Purdue and they said okay, except that they can't promise me housing. And they said, unless you can arrange your own housing, they would advise me not to go there because they said, like most universities at that time, they were just full of returning veterans. And housing is difficult to get. So some young kid from Hawai'i going there alone they thought might be difficult. So some of my friends, Don Shimazu, had decided to go to Rose. I heard about Rose, I think from Don, but we also had a professor, Carl Andrews, who was at the University [of Hawai'i] and was a graduate of Rose. So I wrote to my friend who was my platoon commander in the army, who was a lawyer (from) Evansville, Indiana. I wrote to him and I asked him, "Do you know anything

about Rose Poly?"

He wrote back and said, "Yes, it's an excellent school. It's small, but it's excellent." So he said if I can't get in there [Purdue] I should go there [Rose Poly].

So I applied, and they said the same thing, you know, my grades were good enough that they'll take me except that they had no [housing] vacancy, and said unless I can get housing, they advised me not to come. And about a week before school started, they sent me a telegram saying that they had a last minute cancellation so if I wanted to come, they'll take me. So I think within the next few days, I was on a Pan-American clipper (chuckles) flying to the West Coast.

WN: That's in Terre Haute, Indiana?

FM: Yes.

WN: That's where you went?

FM: Yes. I went to, I forget where, but then from there took a train to Chicago, I think, and down from Chicago to Terre Haute.

MK: And then when you got there, how did you find your classes to be?

FM: An excellent faculty, small classes, excellent students. It's a highly competitive school. I think they have the highest percentage of National Merit Scholars in their student body. Much later, when I was president of the University [of Hawai'i], I visited Rose and suggested to the president that we have a home-and-home basketball [series] because [University of Hawai'i at] Hilo was pretty good at that time, right? Hilo is a small school. So I said, "I tell you what, why don't you guys come play Hilo?" And they came and they played at Hilo. But on that basketball team, of I think about twelve members—they don't give any athletic scholarships, they're all engineering students so they really have a tough, tough workload. And I think in that group of ten or twelve basketball players, there were about six or seven class valedictorians. So they're bright kids, but also good athletes.

MK: So back in your days, too, it was a vigorous kind of program.

FM: Yes. And when I got out of there, I applied to MIT and Yale [University], and got accepted by both. So I'm sure the school was well known among the universities. I had never heard of it. I'd say, "Rose what?"

(Laughter)

FM: But because my friend said it was a good school. And he's a great friend of mine, he just—he died recently. But he said it was a good school, so I said, okay. If Bailey says it's good, it's good enough for me. I went there.

MK: And how were your professors there?

FM: Again, I had one outstanding professor, his name was [Leo] McClain, and he taught me the

structural engineering side. You know, civil engineering is so broad that there are other areas. Highway engineering, the one that I used to fall asleep on, (chuckles) that's one area. And then there's sanitary engineering, water supply, and all kinds. And those things didn't interest me. But there's quite a bit of mathematics in the structural side, mathematics and physics, so that's the area that I was interested in. And this guy McClain was a very demanding professor. The students called him "Leo the Lion" because he had kind of a white mane and very ferocious look.

(Laughter)

FM: He was my favorite professor. I learned a lot from him.

MK: Should we end here, and then we'll continue again. What we'll do is we'll continue with your Rose Poly experience, probably about your life there and maybe some comparisons with UH. And your marriage, and moving onwards.

FM: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-19-4-96

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

September 25, 1996

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on Wednesday, September 25, 1996 and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Michi Kodama-Nishimoto and Warren Nishimoto.

MK: Let's see, at the end of last session, we had gotten up to your time at Rose Poly. And we're going to continue with that period of your life. We talked about where Rose Poly is, why you went there, you mentioned a very good professor you had there, a Dr. McClain. And you talked about the high standards of academics there that they still continue to this day. So that's where we ended. I was wondering, as a student there, what was life like for you?

FM: Typical college, I guess. It was an all-boys school, no women, and quite a few veterans. (There are female students now, however.) We lived in barracks because the school had a specialized—you know the program that I was in (which) was called ASTP, Army Specialized Training Program, they had that program on campus. So they had built some barracks for those students and we lived there. It has a beautiful campus with a lake. And we had athletics but no athletic scholarships. (Chuckles) Our football team wasn't very good so we kept losing.

(Laughter)

FM: And the football coach—you know, with all the football problems here this might be interesting—but our football coach was head of the student dormitories. So he was more interested in the students' welfare than to win football games. And besides, I guess we didn't have the talent because these are all engineering students; they had to study very hard. But we did have a football team, and the coach's name was Phil Brown. I guess he had the longest losing streak of any. . . .

(Laughter)

FM: But nobody threatened to fire him. And he didn't make more money than the president. (Chuckles) So I come from a tradition of small college, it's a private college, and really amateur campus sports. So even though we had (intercollegiate) games, it's all on the campus. You know, you don't use a separate stadium, and if you had a crowd of five hundred, that's a pretty big, noisy crowd. So we had a lot of fun.

- MK: You mentioned that it was an engineering school. Was it solely an engineering school?
- FM: Mm hmm [yes]. The name was "Polytechnic," and that means engineering. Of course, they teach—you have the liberal arts core that you had to take, but the electives are all technical electives. Well, science, physics, mathematics and various kinds of engineering courses.
- MK: You mentioned that the standards there were quite high. How did you fare coming from UH [University of Hawai'i]?
- FM: Okay. Good enough that when I—well, I don't like to talk about these things—but I graduated with high honors. There were honors and high honors, so I did pretty well academically. But you can say, oh well, that's a small school in (chuckles) the middle of Indiana someplace that nobody heard of. But I applied to two graduate schools, MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] and Yale [University], MIT because of the general excellence in engineering, and Yale because there was an excellent professor there. If I went to Yale it'd be because of that professor rather than Yale as an institution. Whereas MIT was more the institution. And, you know, I was accepted by both so I could choose either one. And I chose MIT. So it [Rose Poly] must have given me an excellent training starting from the University [of Hawai'i], you know, Ken Watanabe's math courses and things like that. And then when I went to MIT I found that there were students from all over the world there. And I did okay there.
- WN: You took liberal arts courses, also, at Rose . . .
- FM: No, I had finished those at UH.
- WN: Oh, I see.
- FM: Because I'd transferred there [Rose Poly] at the end of my sophomore year.
- MK: You mentioned that Rose was an all-boys school. So in terms of a social life, what was possible there?
- FM: There was an all-girls school (laughs) on the other side of town.
- (Laughter)
- FM: And we used to get together weekends at the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] and things like that. I didn't do too much of that because I had a girlfriend back home. (Chuckles) She's now my wife. But others who were more inclined to enjoy the social life, that's what they did.
- MK: And the town there was it a college town, then, basically?
- FM: (Not really. Terre Haute was an old railroad town.) The college was founded by old Chauncy Rose who was a railroad man. Built railroads, and I don't know all of the history, but he founded Rose Polytechnic Institute.
- MK: And I know that in the last interview, you mentioned that you had gone to school on the GI Bill, but while you were at Rose Polytechnic did you have to kind of supplement the GI Bill

with part-time work at all?

FM: No, no. I lived within my means. (Chuckles) And it wasn't very much. But I lived in the barracks and we ate at the dorm. I very seldom went to town, and town wasn't much to speak of. Terre Haute, Indiana is not a big town.

WN: Isn't that where Indiana State [University] is also?

FM: Indiana State is there, yes. And there is kind of a rough part of town, but basically there wasn't very much going on there. So I stayed in the dorm and I really didn't have any way to spend that money if I wanted to.

MK: I was wondering, since this was the first time that you were living in a Mainland community for an extended period of time outside of military life, what were your feelings about living in this different area?

FM: Well, when I did go into town you got a lot of stares, but it was not hostile or anything but basically curiosity. As a matter of fact, we became—we were befriended by, I should say, a person who was a mechanical consulting engineer in Terre Haute. His son was attending Rose, and through his son we got to know the family. And they were really, really nice people. So on special occasions like Thanksgiving or Christmas, they would invite us. And sometimes on weekends they'd feed us and we'd socialize. So it was a very positive experience for me.

MK: Were there some other Hawai'i students there at that time?

FM: Mm hmm [yes]. I didn't know that when I went there. But when I got there, there were about four or five other Hawai'i guys. Some of whom I knew. Let's see, Al Yee is a prominent engineer here and also very active in Asia and the Pacific Islands, he was there. He was one semester ahead of me. Then Don Shimazu whom I knew, he was in the 522nd Artillery. And he and I ended up being roommates. And Shinji Soneda, Tets Mitsuda, Ben Ranada, we were all together. We started about the same time, but Al Yee finished first, and then I think Don Shimazu and I finished. . . . No, Tets Mitsuda and I finished together and Don Shimazu and Ben Ranada finished after us. At that time it was on a continuous base—universities were running basically year-round. Because there was so much backlog of returning GIs wanting to get educated. So we were on a quarter system and we'd go year-round.

MK: With there being such a backlog with all the veterans coming back, was the curriculum in any way shortened or changed to accommodate the larger numbers?

FM: Not to my knowledge. I think what they did was they added the extra quarter so you finished faster.

MK: During the time that you were up there, did you ever visit home from '47 to '49?

FM: No. (Chuckles) Didn't even occur to me that you could do that.

(Laughter)

FM: Those were the days, you know, when you go away to school you don't go home until you

finish. You know, don't come back without the degree.

(Laughter)

FM: Now every Christmas the kids gotta come home or maybe even long weekends, I don't know.

(Laughter)

MK: So during that time how much contact did you have with your family?

FM: Oh, by letter. Not even phone calls. Phone calls were expensive.

MK: And when you graduated from Rose Poly, at that point what plan did you have?

FM: Approaching graduation, I really didn't have any plans except to go to work. But Professor Leo McClain urged me to go on to graduate school. So I said, "Oh, okay, I'll take another year." I had more GI Bill left. I guess I didn't have any burning ambition to do something. I think I went to the university basically because I enjoy studying, I enjoyed discovery and learning about things. I'm not even sure that I [was] suited to be an engineer. (Chuckles) So when Dr. McClain said, "Why don't you go on to graduate school?"

I asked him, "Oh, what do I do there?"

"Well, get more. . . ." He had—I guess I call him "doctor" but I think he had a master's degree. He was a good engineer, was a good teacher, but he also worked summertime for one of the aircraft companies as a structural engineer. But anyway, he said I should go and learn more.

So I said, "Okay. That sounds like fun."

And I asked him where and he recommended those two schools that I should apply to. So I did. I applied for a master's degree. Getting a doctorate was, again, not even part of my plan. And that's kind of a funny story because I don't have a master's degree. I went to MIT, signed up for a master's degree, and after the first year, you know, you do all the course work, and at MIT for a master's degree you have to do a thesis, a research thesis. So during my second semester I started thinking about what I can do for a research thesis and it seemed like a lot of work to do, (chuckles) a master's thesis. So I went to see my professor who's another—I'm so lucky because I had these great professors. And I went to see Dr. Norris, Chuck Norris. And I asked him what did he think of my switching to a doctorate.

He said, "How come?"

I said, "Well, if I'm going to do a thesis anyway, I might as well do it for a doctorate."

And so he said, "Oh, okay. If you want to do that."

So I switched. Which meant that I not only had to do, of course, a bigger thesis, but I had to do more course work because to get a doctorate you gotta do a minor, which I did in mathematics. And then in addition to your specialty, which in my case was structures, you had

to do a couple of other specialties in civil engineering, so I took soil mechanics and hydraulics, each of which is a specialty within civil engineering. Of course, I didn't cover everything, but I covered some of the (advanced) concepts and courses in those two fields. So you're pretty well rounded.

My specialty in structures was structural dynamics. Most structural engineers learn how to design buildings that are not moving. In fact, you don't want it to move, right? (Chuckles) When the building moves, you're in trouble. And most of the loads are gravity loads. When you design a building like this, you worry about what's going to happen to the floor (and columns) because of the weight of the concrete and the loading that you put on it. So you design the building to be strong enough to take whatever gravity loads you may impose on it. And then for other kinds of loadings like winds or earthquakes, they make a very rough approximation and convert them to static horizontal loads. If you say, well, if the wind is blowing so much, that means you get so much (horizontal) pressure on the building so then you design it to withstand that loading. But that really is not the right way. You've got to treat it as a dynamic problem. Like say, what happens when you get hit by an earthquake? The ground is shaking and you cannot assume that there is a steady force on the building due to the earthquake because that's far from the truth. And, in fact, if you did that kind of analysis, it gives you the wrong results. You design on that basis, the building will collapse in many cases. So that was my (research focus—structural dynamics).

We did some experiments in the (civil engineering) building, to study how materials behaved under these dynamic loading. The condition that we were trying to simulate, and which (led) later on, to full-scale tests, were atomic explosions. One of my friends who preceded me designed a machine that would apply these high-impulse loadings. So when we're running these tests, down in the basement at MIT, (chuckles) we press the (warning) buzzer (that can be heard) throughout the building [FM makes buzzing sound] and then [FM snaps fingers] we set it off and goes *poom!* (Chuckles) Across the hall we had some sanitary engineers with their test tubes and (experiments). When they hear the buzzer they have to hold everything down.

(Laughter)

FM: So I learned a lot about instrumentation because when you test those things, you have to measure what's happening, and you know, it happens so fast that the normal way you measure things, say, for a civil engineer, the normal civil engineer, doesn't work. So anyway, I learned a lot from a Chinese Ph.D. who came from China to study at MIT, (who went) back to China. We became good friends. His specialty was instrumentation, so he would do (his thing) and I would ask, "What are you doing? How does it work?" et cetera. So, extracurricular stuff that I learned. And after the laboratory phase was over, I had to go out to the field, and the field in that case was Nevada. You know, they have the test sites in Nevada where they set off A-bombs. And I was involved in those tests. And later on after that, we were involved in the A-bomb tests out in the Pacific. So if this were night, you turn off all the lights I'd be glowing.

(Laughter)

WN: So in essence, you were testing building structures. . . .

FM: To withstand the (atom bomb blasts). So it was called protective construction. The weapon

was just a device to develop the force. I wasn't involved in weapons development, but knowing that others were developing and (might) use these bombs against us, we needed to be able to design buildings that can withstand these tremendous forces. And in some cases, you just can't do it. But you learn about how materials behave and how structures behave. The method of analysis is (applicable) to earthquakes. So whether the building is hit by a blast wave or by an earthquake wave, the same techniques can be applied to study what happens. So the real advance in earthquake resistant design came about after these tests were done. The (person) that I worked for at the [University of] Illinois (after MIT)—a great professor, his name was Newmark—is the father of modern earthquake engineering).

WN: Were these programs funded by the federal government?

FM: [U.S.] Department of Defense classified research.

WN: Yeah, classified I would imagine. Sounds like classified research.

FM: Yes, I had the Atomic Energy Commission clearance and Department of Defense secret clearance. In order to design our buildings we had to know what these bombs did and that was highly classified information. Of course, I don't remember any of that. It's unthinkable today, but at that time, universities used to—remember, this is right after the war and the cold war was heating up—so universities were involved in classified research. (My diploma indicates that I completed all the requirements for a doctor of science degree in civil engineering and have completed my research in "classified research".)

MK: Oh.

WN: You still have that diploma?

FM: I still have that diploma. (WN laughs.) So the thesis that I wrote, they wouldn't let me keep a copy because it had classified information in it. Now, any university that tries to do that, I think, the students and the professors and everybody would protest and have a sit-in or a riot or something. But at that time, I guess they didn't think anything of it because I went from MIT to Illinois, both great schools, and at Illinois I continued that research. In fact, some of my later work out in the Pacific was through Illinois. And when I came back to the University of Hawai'i, I was involved in that kind of research. But at that time, because the University [of Hawai'i] really didn't have any research facilities or support, I did it as a consultant to SRI—Stanford Research Institute—under contract to the Department of Defense. So at that time, more or less, everybody who had the capability was doing it. But times have changed.

MK: I was wondering, how did you get interested in that particular topic?

FM: Well, when I decided to go for a doctorate it became clear that I didn't have enough GI Bill to do it. And I needed financial assistance. To get financial assistance you could get a graduate assistantship. In my case I got a research assistantship, which meant that I get involved in doing research rather than teaching. And that was what I wanted to do, because when you get a research assistantship, what you get paid to do can also become your thesis. And they had a number of research projects going on in the department of civil engineering, but in my field of structures, that was the most interesting project because there were a lot of stuff that you don't know and you have to find out about.

MK: As a point of curiosity you mentioned that gee, if you turned off the lights, you would be glowing. (FM chuckles.) Back in those days, were you aware of the dangers of it and . . .

FM: Yes.

MK: . . . did people take precautions?

FM: Oh yes. When we went to the field we were dressed in—I forget what you call it, but anyway—like a coverall (and mask) so you don't breathe in any of the dust and stuff. And they'd give you a radiation tag that measures the radiation that you're exposed to. And every day after work you'd turn in your badge to see how much radiation you accumulated. And they have it controlled so that you don't get more than what they deemed to be safe at that time, which apparently turned out to be too high in some cases. But yes. They took all the necessary precautions based on the knowledge at that time. But (our) research was to find out what (the structural) effects were. So we were, in some of our experiments, involved with what kind of earth motion you get when an A-bomb is exploded underground. And that's a very dirty bomb. And then (after detonation) we cannot go in for a long time, you know, because of safety, radiation considerations. And when you finally go in, they take extra precautions so you don't get—you do get exposed but you don't get more than what is safe. Whereas an air burst, when it's way up, the effect is much less. I mean the radiation effect. So I, as far as I know, I was okay.

But I did end up with a form of cancer. When I was at MIT, before I left there, I started to get a lump behind my left ear. I went to the dispensary and the (doctor said), "It's a cyst," and cut it out. (A few) months later (it was back and had to be removed again). When I came back to Hawai'i it (returned and had to be removed a couple of times more by a general practitioner. When he was going to do it a third time, in his office,) I said, "Wait a minute, I want to get a second opinion."

So I went to another doctor, (a surgeon) and I told him the history, and he said, "Well, just to be safe, why don't we do it at the hospital and take a biopsy." So I went to St. Francis [Medical Center] and did it. And then it came back that it was malignant but it was a very slow-growing kind of malignancy. So (the doctor) operated and cleaned me out and nothing has happened since then. So it may have been something else.

(Laughter)

MK: The research that you did was really interesting.

FM: Yes, it was fun research. We did some simplistic things like if we want to measure—when you want to measure, say, how the earth moves, you develop some rather elaborate instrumentation. You put things in the ground, see how they move. We have high-speed photography that'll take the picture. So you use different (instruments), but they're all very expensive. So we were thinking that, gee, I wonder if there's a better way to get a rough measure of how much movement there is, acceleration, et cetera. So we devised some simple experiments. And we did some mathematical analysis of how these things should behave. These were steel pins of various diameters and heights that, depending on the frequency and the intensity (of vibrations, would topple over. We tried) to predict which ones would fall and which ones would not. But the results were very chaotic.

(Laughter)

FM: I think primarily because the earth movement is not orderly. It's going every which way, right? So it's kind of hard to do. But with an accelerometer, it measures acceleration, we measured in three directions and then you got to use mathematical methods to convert the acceleration to velocity and the velocity to displacement and. . . . So it's a lot of fun. It's tedious work too, but it's kind of interesting.

MK: So it seems like you enjoyed your research.

FM: Oh yes.

MK: How was the dissertation writing and the exam following that for you?

FM: The writing of the dissertation was not bad. Because it's classified, I couldn't hire somebody to type it for me. I had to do it myself.

(Laughter)

FM: And then during the written examination—we had a written exam and an oral exam. If you pass the written then you got to take the oral. And the written exam was on the three fields that I studied: structures, soil mechanics and hydraulics. And it's a take-home exam. You just take it home. You had one week to do it. You can (refer to) any book, any article. What you can't do is talk to anyone. It's an honor system. So you go home and you work the problems. Was kind of hard.

There was a professor named Chris Holly, Myles J. Holly. And he'd been working on a problem for quite some time and he couldn't solve it. He didn't know how to solve it. So he'd give that to the (chuckles) doctoral candidates, see if they can solve it.

(Laughter)

FM: So you know, that kind, there's nothing in the book. You can't read a textbook to see how somebody else did it. So the exams were really the kind that (made you) think. There is no clear answer. Sometimes you don't even know whether or not there is an answer. But they want to see how you think. Whether there's logic or we're just throwing darts, or what. I guess I was more nervous at the oral exam because the oral exam was short, just a matter of a few hours instead of a week. But the written exam, you have a chance to think. The oral exam you're standing on your feet and you got three or four professors shooting questions at you. But I was able to pass so everything came out okay. (Chuckles)

WN: Did you feel, you know, for MIT you were at the cutting edge, probably, of research and facilities as well as fellow students. Did you feel a lot of pressure in terms of competition there?

FM: Not really. There were a lot of bright guys. There was competition, to be sure. But as far as I know, they never graded on a bell curve or anything. If you're able to attain a certain level, if the whole class did it, I guess the whole class would get an A. So there was not competition in that sense, that only one or two guys were gonna get A's. There was not the tendency to go

and hide and do it yourself so that others can't learn from you, quite the contrary. So it was a very healthy atmosphere. We had people from Europe, that one guy from China, couple of South Americans, but mostly U.S. at that time. Now it's much more international, I guess.

MK: You mentioned that in your Ph.D. exams they were really interested in your thinking process, the logic that you exercise, see whether or not . . .

FM: In the written exams, yeah.

MK: . . . you're really thinking. In the classes themselves, was there a certain philosophy like that? An emphasis on developing thought processes rather than just giving you information, having you . . .

FM: Oh yes.

MK: . . . regurgitate it?

FM: At least in the engineering-type courses, it was primarily analysis. To be able to take your problem, to break it apart, and analyze it. And, of course, when you get into research, that's all there is. You have a problem, and you have some basic rules of physics and some basic information about how materials behave, and then you gotta put those two together. After I finished my doctoral work, I stayed at MIT to continue my research. And I was working on what happens to a concrete dam that's holding back water when it's hit by an A-bomb and you get the shock coming through the water, what happens to the dam. And it was a very complicated problem of how the shock waves hit the face and then it's transmitted through the structure and bounces off and bounces all over the place, and to analyze that. And so I wrote some equations and I didn't know how to solve the problems because I'd never had those equations. And then it turned out that the answers could be written in terms of what's called elliptical functions that I'd heard of before and saw a few of them in mathematics books. And I'd never—I said, "What are these darn things for?" (Chuckles) But I found that there was a use for these. And I don't think that my professors had seen them before (either), until I came out with these equations—it was a very idealistic treatment of the problem. But I had to go study a part of mathematics that I never had before. And then decided that that really didn't work. But I was satisfied that I was able to get a solution even if it didn't apply because it was too (idealized). Then I ended up going into numerical analysis. In other words, you take a big dam, and break it up into small (particles), each piece connected. And when the stress wave hits then they all start to move about. See what that does to the stress waves and (to the particles). And for that you need a computer. Those were the days when computers were just in their infancy. At MIT we had the Whirlwind II computer. It's a really, really primitive computer. It had vacuum tubes and mechanical (switches), and it was a research computer, meaning that it was being used to develop computers, not to solve other problems. I actually starting using (that computer) for a simpler problem for my doctoral thesis. So that was my first exposure to computers. And we had to sit down and program the computer using very basic program language, computer language. Nobody does it that way anymore. (Chuckles) So I'm a dinosaur.

(Laughter)

FM: But it trained you to tackle those kinds of problems. Nobody sat down and told me, "Okay,

now I'm going to teach you how to use computers because you may need it." It's a conclusion that I came to, that the only way I can solve this problem is, one, numerically; secondly, that means massive, massive numbers of calculation. I can spend my whole life analyzing that problem. So I said, well, I guess what I have to do is use a computer, so we had to go learn how to use a computer. And then computers were just being developed at that time. So the only time we could get on a computer, as I recall, was between midnight and two o'clock in the morning.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: So considering that I got my degree in '52, so that's, what, forty-four years ago, (the dawn of the age of computing).

WN: These are the huge mainframe computers?

FM: Yes, although, if you were to reproduce that computer today, it'll be like a hand-held computer. The progress is really tremendous. But the basic features of the computer are still the same. And when you break it down to its simplest operations, they operate the same way. So to answer your question, the kind of training you received was not to be able to solve set problems, but really to solve problems that you don't know how to solve. So how you approach it, that's very important.

MK: It's really apparent that you were going through a high-level research university. Provided you with the equipment to do all that.

FM: By contrast, when I came back to UH to teach—when I went to Illinois, Illinois had a first-class structural laboratory. But it was more the traditional civil engineering kind of testing laboratory. More the static tests. But at MIT it was, you know. . . . In fact, at MIT you had to develop the machine to do the testing because no machine existed to do the testing that you wanted. So it was a really good experience for me.

MK: Since you were doing all this research at MIT was your heart more into, say, research than in the teaching aspect?

FM: Yes. Because I enjoyed learning, but I'd never done any teaching. At MIT after getting my doctorate I did two (more) years of research. Then when I went to Illinois, I did one year of research, but taught one course. And then I wanted to come back home and the only job I could get was at the University [of Hawai'i] to teach. I wanted to do research but found that we didn't have the facilities. And really, the university didn't provide you any sort of opportunity or encouragement for research. Those days, I used to teach (four to) five courses (each semester). (Chuckles) But now, most professors teach one or two? So if I wanted to do research I had to do it on my own time.

MK: I know that we've gone a little bit ahead to your time at UH, but just staying back a little bit on MIT, I was wondering, when you weren't doing research, studying, working on your

dissertation, what was your life like at MIT?

FM: Well, I was married then. After I finished Rose, I came back. See, I finished in January and applied to MIT, was accepted, but class started in September. So I had basically eight or nine months before I went back to school. So I worked for those nine months as a hydraulic engineer for the U.S. Geological Survey. You know, they measure rainfall, and stream flows, and things like that.

MK: And during that time that you were back home, you mentioned you got married, right?

FM: Uh huh [yes].

MK: Who did you marry?

FM: Amy Saiki. I knew her from McKinley High School. She was a junior when I was a senior.

MK: And since you knew her from the time you were at McKinley, did the courtship start from that time? Or. . . .

FM: Uh, yes and no. I was interested (chuckles) in her from that time, but she had a different boyfriend. He was the quarterback on the football team.

(Laughter)

FM: But anyway, she was one year below me so she wasn't really among my friends. But we---I worked on the school annual. Because of the war years, instead of the usual glossy annual, we came out with three pamphlets, about six-by-eight [inch] pamphlets. She was an editor for the senior class, as I recall. And so I was involved in it, mostly so I can work with her.

(Laughter)

FM: So I got to know her better. But I had, you know, I had other girlfriends, too. But after the war, when I went back to the university [UH] we spent a little more time together.

MK: And eventually you got married in June 1949.

FM: Yes. Uh, 1949, yeah. After I finished college.

MK: You were an engineer, but what was Amy's occupation?

FM: She attended UH but she had, she was kind of physically weak. She was very frail. She still weighs only ninety pounds. But anyway, she started school but dropped out, and then while I was at Rose Poly she worked for the Veteran's Administration, at that time on the ['Iolani] Palace grounds, as I recall. She was studying liberal arts.

MK: And then eventually how many children did you and Mrs. Matsuda have?

FM: Six.

MK: And . . .

FM: And the first one was born in 1951, so that's when I was working on my thesis and taking my doctoral exams. And a few days after he was born—he was born in March 1951—I had to go to the Pacific to be involved in some of these [A-bomb] tests. And so here Amy was, in Massachusetts all by herself, for her first baby, and her husband took off. (Chuckles)

I arranged for her to stay with this army buddy of mine in Boston. But she was also pregnant, I mean, his wife. And so Amy stayed there for, I think a week or so, then her sister came from Hawai'i to help so she went back to her own apartment. So while we were at MIT we had three kids. All born at the Boston Lying-In Hospital.

MK: How did you manage your studies, and your research with a family?

FM: Well, long hours. The kids were young enough that—you know, they were really infants. So Amy had—the question should be posed to her, “How did you manage with (chuckles) young kids when your husband wasn't around to help?” But I'd help wash the diapers, and things like that. But actually caring for the baby, you know, feeding, bathing, whatnot, my wife took care of. I'd maybe walk the floors at night sometimes, but she deserves all the credit.

MK: And with a family and you're actually just being a graduate student, how did you manage financially?

FM: When we got married, I think our monthly stipend went from something like seventy-five dollars to ninety dollars.

(Laughter)

FM: And she was working before we got married, and I worked for a few months, so we had saved some money. And then before the baby came, she worked at MIT in the alumni office. So between her salary and my GI Bill, we got by. We saved a few bucks, even. But we were so broke—I gotta tell you this story. Our first anniversary, right, so I said, oh, I'm going to get her an anniversary present, but I didn't have any money. So I said, I'm going to get her something that she'll like that she can use, so I got her a kitchen knife.

(Laughter)

FM: Yeah, those were the days.

(Laughter)

FM: I thought she was going to say, “Oh, I'm going to go home to Mom.”

(Laughter)

FM: But no, she was a great wife. She is a great wife.

MK: I noticed you got your Ph.D. in three years, right, '49 . . .

FM: Uh huh, something like that. That's because I didn't get my master's. You see, if you skip that you save a year.

MK: So other people at MIT also did it in three years?

FM: Sometimes they do. In my class, I think I was the only one. But it didn't occur to me not to do it. (Chuckles) I had one friend who tried—who (had a master's) and tried for a Ph.D. (at MIT) and failed. Which was a tragic case because that guy was an associate professor at some university. He wanted to get a Ph.D. so he can go back and become a full professor. But he couldn't pass the general examination (after two years of course work). So for him, it was a tragic, tragic mistake because he would have been much better off to not try. He couldn't go back to the same university, (he had to change careers and go into consulting work. Another friend, from Norway, took two or three years more to finish. But it's partly luck in that it depends on the subject that you choose for research. If you pick the wrong subject, it can take you a long time. In my case, I had the federal government behind me spending all kinds of money.

(Laughter)

FM: Not for my sake.

(Laughter)

WN: I was wondering, where did you go in the Pacific?

FM: We went to places like Eniwetok that are now (having) big problems because of all the nuclear holocaust that took place there. Went to Bikini [Atoll]. That Bikini shot was—that's after I came back to Hawai'i as a consultant to SRI, was the first H-bomb test (I saw). I didn't know that it was (a hydrogen device), but when I saw it happen, I deduced that it must be (a fusion bomb) because of the way it behaved. But even then you kind of have blinders on, you're (primarily) interested in your own program.

WN: Was part of the purpose in testing, to test structures and how they stood up?

FM: Yes.

WN: So did they put structures up or anything?

FM: At Bikini we had three-story (steel and) concrete structures, full size.

WN: Constructed just for the testing?

FM: Just to set off the bomb and see if they would behave the way we predicted. So all the material and the construction is done very carefully. And then we instrument these (buildings), we put measuring devices and we had high-speed photography. You know, you've seen these pictures where you take a light bulb and the bullet goes through it and it captures the instant of the impact and the glass shattering and freezes. The guy that invented that kind of a system, stroboscopic photography, is an MIT professor. He was involved in providing the very high-speed photography capabilities for us. And we'd take a picture of the building as well as have

electronic measuring devices.

WN: Were you involved in the construction of the structures at all?

FM: No, well . . .

WN: The designing . . .

FM: Well, the designing part but the actual construction was done by DOD [Department of Defense] contractors, I think, Holmes and Narver.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: We were just talking off tape about classified research and really, it may have been probably—classified research was probably one of the forerunners of what we call organized research in universities today?

FM: Oh yes. Individual research has been going on, you might say, forever. But organized research, sponsored research, federal government-funded research, I think, had its, if not the start, at least the real impetus came during the war and after the war. So in the early postwar—well, during the war, there were all kinds of research. And then toward the end of World War [II], the development of the atomic bomb. Initial experiments at the Argonne National Laboratory, University of Chicago, and then Los Alamos. The best scientists were drawn from the universities to work on these (projects). So it's natural that universities would be involved in classified research. At MIT, Lincoln Laboratory was involved in developing radar. And it's still a major, major research program. And nowadays, they do both classified and unclassified research. And industrial research for corporate sponsors.

MK: We know that after you got your degree at MIT, you stayed there for maybe one or two more years.

FM: Two years.

MK: Two years as a research engineer. Was it the same field of study that you pursued?

FM: It was a continuation of what I was doing. That's when I was working on the dam problem.

MK: And at that point, I guess, you were a full-time researcher.

FM: Yes.

MK: As a full-time researcher at MIT did you have, say, the equivalent of tenure or some sort of security?

FM: Oh no. I guess I've never even—I was more interested in the subject than the status.
(Chuckles)

WN: You were like on soft money?

FM: Yes, definitely.

MK: And then 1954, we know that you went to the University of Illinois, became assistant professor there. Why did you end up going to the University of Illinois?

FM: Because Nate Newmark was there. Because by then I'd been five years at MIT, I learned a great deal from my classmates and from my professors, and I knew about Nate Newmark by reputation. And so I wanted to spend a year or two with him, learn from him.

WN: Was staying at MIT an option?

FM: I think so, yes. Because that program continued for several more years. It eventually petered out but the two big organizations involved in that kind of research was MIT and Illinois. And MIT had its strengths and Illinois had its strengths and Nate Newmark was really one of the geniuses in our field.

MK: And when you went to the University of Illinois, what did you do?

FM: Continued in structural dynamics. Illinois also had contracts with the Department of Defense, so it was basically doing the same kind of work.

WN: I went to Illinois and I've been to Boston, and I can tell you, right, it's two different areas.

FM: Oh yeah.

WN: So how did you adjust to the change and how did Amy adjust?

FM: Well, I went to Rose Poly which is not too far from Urbana. Amy loved Boston, she hated Illinois.

(Laughter)

FM: Not the University of Illinois, but . . .

WN: Urbana.

FM: . . . Illinois because she's allergic, hay fever and things like that and the summers are oppressive. It's very hot and muggy and so she didn't like it there. I think she might have gotten used to it except that after I spent one year at Illinois I was able to find a job at the UH. I had planned to stay there [Illinois] longer, you know, but because the opportunity came I took it. One of my friends, his name was J.D. Haltiwanger, when I told him I'm going to resign and go to Hawai'i, he told me, "What do you want to do that for? All the opportunities are here, so if you go back to Hawai'i, that little state university there, there's nothing there for you."

So I said, "Yeah, but that's home. That's where my family is."

So some years later, I'm the president of the University of Hawai'i, he writes me a note, says, "I told you there's nothing there for you."

(Laughter)

WN: Before we get into your University [of Hawai'i years]—do you have any more questions?

MK: Well, I was wondering, when you were at Illinois, you may have said it earlier in the interview, but I was curious, how much of a teaching load did you have there?

FM: I had just one course in the whole year that I was there.

MK: How did you like or dislike the teaching experience?

FM: I guess I was kind of neutral. Frankly, at that time I was much more interested in research and the teaching was something I thought I ought to try. But I didn't enjoy it so much that I would say, well, I'm gonna switch to teaching. But I guess it's a good thing I did it because otherwise, maybe I wouldn't have had a job at the University of Hawai'i. (Chuckles)

MK: And when you were at Illinois was that like a tenure track kind of a position for you?

FM: I don't think so. And again, I wasn't conscious of those things. I doubt it because at least the biggest part of my pay came from the contract, the research contract. But having said that, Haltiwanger and others who were involved in some of the projects stayed on for a long time. Haltiwanger, I think, became assistant dean or something. So I guess had I stayed—and assuming that I could perform—that transitioning would not have been a problem. In those days, you know, this was still postwar and lot of growth, universities were growing rapidly, so for those who wanted to and who could qualify, getting into a tenure slot was not a problem. I wasn't even conscious of it. When I came back to the University of Hawai'i, I didn't ask, "Is this a tenure track?" (Chuckles) And in fact, when I got tenure at that time it was more or less automatic, meaning that if you got promoted to an associate professor, tenure came with it. Right now it's two separate considerations. So it became a lot stricter in a way, later. So when I became an associate professor and got tenure, I didn't think it was a big deal.

WN: Did you always have it in your mind to go back to Hawai'i?

FM: Yes. Oh yes.

WN: What if you really enjoyed Champaign, would you have considered staying up in the Mainland?

FM: Probably not. I have enough Japanese culture that I'm the only son, my parents are back here, so it was only a question of how and when because I had to have a job. And by that time I identified the opportunity as being at the university rather than, say, working in a consulting engineer's (office) or something like that. So when that opportunity came, I took it even though it was at a loss in pay and all that.

MK: Before you came back to UH you were still at Illinois, and in 1954 we had the Democratic revolution in the islands. Did you hear news of that or did you have any thoughts about that?

FM: No. I was busy (chuckles) doing my research. I was . . .

(Telephone rings.)

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-20-5-96

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Honolulu, O'ahu

October 9, 1996

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

- WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda on October 9, 1996 and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto. This is for the University of Hawai'i presidents oral history project.
- MK: Okay, this is the fifth session with Dr. Fujio Matsuda and we were just having a conversation about your involvement in research having to do with developing protective structures in A-bomb-type situations. And we were also talking about the difference between the type of research you did and the type of research that the weaponry development side was doing. And maybe we can recap that first.
- FM: Okay. I think the question was if I were to become [university] president today and this became a question or an issue, what might be the consequence. As I was saying, we were involved in the development, understanding of how buildings behaved under exposure to very large forces like A-bombs, which also applied to earthquakes as well. Some of that was theoretical study, some experimental. Some of the experimental tests were in the laboratory, but some of the tests were full-scale A-bomb tests (in Nevada and) out in the Pacific. So if, say, I were involved in those kinds of tests today, there'd be, of course, substantial questions quite aside from the purpose of the test. Just the test itself, you know, exploding A-bombs in the air or on the surface of the ocean or—god forbid—on these coral atolls where people call home. Those tests were military classified, so people in general didn't know. Of course, because it was such a huge project, hundreds of people if not thousands were involved in those tests. But the general U.S. and world population didn't know about these until after the tests were over.
- And my recollection is that during those days, there were no protests that these were immoral or these were wrong. The U.S. and other countries all were in the arms race and they were trying to develop and perfect these weapons. And our project was basically focused on how do you protect against these weapons. What if the Russians got there first with the weapon? How do we protect our facilities and our population against these kinds of attacks? I was comfortable with it. I didn't have any moral pangs or anything in getting in because I thought the thing that we were doing would be useful and helpful to protect the population. But weapons of mass destruction are immoral, they should not be allowed to happen under any circumstances. And so any test for whatever purpose would be frowned upon. I'd be out of business if (we were to do it) today.

(Laughter)

FM: But purely from the scientific and technology point of view, say, as an engineer, it's a very interesting question. Buildings are normally designed to stand up against gravity loads which are static vertical. The loads we were studying were horizontal loads, you know. So if you build a very strong building to withstand the gravity loads, and all of sudden you (apply a horizontal) load, what happens to it? And then instead of a steady load, you apply a very short and very intensive loading. That changes the whole behavior. So it's a very interesting problem. (It also has a nonmilitary) application, because the same methodology that you use and same behavior that these buildings exhibit are applicable to earthquakes. In earthquakes, you see a lateral load, and, relatively speaking, very rapid. Not as rapid as an A-bomb load but compared to wind loads, very rapid. The earthquake-proof buildings that come up now, you know, modern ones, can withstand earthquakes. Unless this kind of understanding and knowledge were developed, we couldn't be building these buildings that can withstand earthquakes. So it had a peaceful use.

WN: You were saying that the work that you were doing is classified. How did it affect your personal family life doing classified research?

FM: Well, you know, I couldn't talk about my work at home or to my friends or anything. And one interesting sidebar, or whatever you call it, is that my Ph.D. thesis says "classified" because I wrote it on that subject. So I wasn't allowed to keep a copy of my thesis with me, (chuckles) so I don't have one. I can't prove that I did that work. It's since been declassified, but it's too late. I don't have it.

The one thing that happened was, shortly after our first child was born, our first son, I think about a couple of weeks later, I had to go to the South Pacific to participate in some of these tests. And my wife couldn't. . . . Our friends at MIT would say, "What happened to Fudge? Where is he?"

And she couldn't tell them where I went. All she could say, "Oh, he's on a trip," or something. And I was gone quite a while. More than a month, as I recall. So people—I'm sure people were wondering whether she's been abandoned or . . .

(Laughter)

FM: . . . husband deserts. . . .

WN: Especially if they found out that you were on a Pacific island.

FM: Yeah, right.

WN: Sounds worse.

(Laughter)

WN: Were there any problems gaining clearance to conduct that type of research?

FM: No. I needed, of course, very high clearance. In order to be able to get data about what the A-

bomb does so we could design the buildings, I had to get what was called a Q clearance from the AEC, Atomic Energy Commission. And that is, you get a complete FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] background check, and stuff like that. And then also, you need to get a secret clearance from the Department of Defense which is a different clearance. But having been a veteran, you know, served in the army and all that, as far as I know there was no problem getting the clearances.

MK: Were there a number of you at MIT involved in that type of research?

FM: In our group, it was a relatively small group, we had maybe four [or] five professors and maybe a dozen graduate students—not all at one time—and oh, maybe half a dozen technicians that were involved in the experimental side. So it was a small group.

MK: Back then did you realize the enormity of this development of the A-bomb and A-bomb research?

FM: Well, my first exposure to the A-bomb was, in fact, the one that ended the war. When I heard that the U.S. had this terrible weapon, my feeling then was that that event was perhaps more important than the war itself. I mean, the war was terrible, millions of people died but that weapon potentially had an even more severe impact, not only on Hiroshima which was the first event but in the world, in the future to come. Because you can't erase that, you can't bury the bomb and forget about it. The weapon was going to affect human society from then on. So as tragic as Hiroshima and Nagasaki were, at that time I thought that maybe that would be only the first of several worse incidents. Because war has been with us for a long time and now we have a different way to fight a different kind of war. And for a while, when the cold war was really at its peak and the U.S. and Russia had thousands of missiles, warheads aimed at each other, that's the sort of scenario I had in mind. But anyway, seems like we regained (our) sanity. I hope so.

WN: Hope so.

MK: I guess we'll kind of shift gears. The last session, we had gotten you back to the UH. You came back in 1955. And you mentioned that there were opportunities staying with the university rather than with an engineering firm. And I was wondering, back then, what did you see as the opportunities of being with the university rather than in private industry?

FM: Well, my experience to that point, (before) coming back to Hawai'i was primarily as a student. As I said I enjoyed (chuckles) being a student, I enjoyed studying. And then, when I [started] working I worked in a university setting doing research and at Illinois, teaching a course, et cetera. So when I came back to Hawai'i I really didn't have an idea of looking for [anything] other than (university) work. In other words, if the University [of Hawai'i] hadn't offered me a job, I wouldn't have come back. So I came to the university with the idea that I would teach, of course, but also that I would do research which is what I enjoyed. (At that time, I) had a contract to work with the University of Illinois on the same project that I was working on at Illinois. SRI, the Stanford Research Institute, was involved in the project as an overall project manager—I was hired as a consultant through SRI to work on the project. That lasted a couple of years until a major test was completed and we finished examining the results and writing the report. But that was the last of such tests.

So after that, I switched to—well, here's a kind of a philosophy involved. My feeling is that if you're going to be a teacher at the university level, you need to do research. You've got to be involved in research, to be involved in seeking new knowledge and in that process you learn what others are doing and so you keep in the forefront of your field. But in the professional school, you know, like engineering or medicine or law, you also need to be able to practice or have experience in practicing the art of the profession. If you're a professor of law, for example, it's not enough just to go through law school, get a degree and then turn around and teach. Unless you practice law you don't understand the way (the legal system works, how) lawyers behave, how clients behave, how judges behave, how juries behave. So if you're only going to teach out of a book, my feeling is, you can't be much of a teacher. You can do the theory, but in the professions you need more than theory. So I thought when I was at MIT and Illinois, I could do more of the research side but at the University of Hawai'i there was not that opportunity. We were too far from (chuckles) Washington [D.C.] where the grants are made or places like Illinois and MIT where the major work was going on. So that's when I decided that if I can't do research, I would learn about the art of engineering, you know, practice of engineering. That's when I started working for Park & Yee [engineering firm] on a part-time basis. So I taught basically a full load at that time. And then did part-time work at Park & Yee.

MK: So your involvement in private industry was not to just supplement your income or to practice your profession as an engineer, but also to aid in your teaching.

FM: Yes. In order to be a good teacher of engineering, I felt that you really needed to know how engineering is practiced in Hawai'i and in the United States. I'll tell you a kind of funny story. When I decided that I wanted to do that, I said, well, if I'm going to practice engineering, I need to be a licensed engineer. As a researcher, I don't need a professional license, I just need contracts. (Chuckles) Grants and contracts. So I said, oh, okay I'll go apply for a license. And I had in mind, well, all this experience doing the experiments, and I have a Ph.D. from MIT, so I should be able to get a license. So I applied (to take the examination), and the licensing board said, "You're not qualified." (Chuckles)

I said, "What?"

They said, "Well, this is not research. This is the application. You have to know the uniform code and you have to know all these (standards that apply. You don't have the necessary experience.)"

So I said, "Okay."

(Laughter)

FM: And although I felt that I could (pass the test), I had to (get some experience) before I could even take the test. So I studied the uniform building code and worked at Park & Yee, got some experience. Then I was able to get my license to practice the art of structural engineering. So I'm a licensed structural engineer from the state of Hawai'i.

MK: To get that license, what do you have to do?

FM: Well, they give you different tests. [For] some earlier tests that I took when I first got out of

college, undergraduate work sufficed. But some of the more practical, advanced (design work) which frankly I hadn't had, I had to study and take the test. But nothing difficult.

MK: In the other professions back then, say, in the legal profession or the architectural profession, there was a barrier to some ethnic groups. In earlier days, if you were of Japanese ancestry and not a *Haole* or Caucasian, sometimes getting into the field was difficult. In the engineering field, what was it like?

FM: Well, of course, mine was after the war, so it was not a problem in terms of getting credentials. In other words, getting the license itself, as far as I know, was not a problem. There was a substantial problem in getting work, however. If I may skip forward—when I became the director of transportation [state of Hawai'i Department of Transportation] one of the few things that Governor [John A.] Burns told me was to try to develop and upgrade the people in Hawai'i. You remember, Jack Burns believed very strongly that the people of Hawai'i were as able as anybody else, but they had this subtle inferiority complex, et cetera. And there were sometimes invisible, sometimes very visible barriers (to their success). When Jack Burns [first] became governor [in 1963], most of the large public works projects were being done by a handful of large, old-time firms, which meant basically *Haole* firms. They were good engineering firms, and I've become good friends with many of the people in those firms, but the system was such that if you were (local) with a small engineering firm you couldn't break into (government contracts). Because many of these involved federal funds and there was a requirement that you had to qualify. How do you qualify? Well, you had to show experience. How do you get experience? Well, (chuckles) you know, it's a (catch-22) situation.

(The federal) bureau of public roads, now the (U.S.) Department of Transportation (required experience in federal-aid highways). What I did was pair up a large firm—some of which were local large firms and some of which were Mainland large firms—(with small local firms as joint-venture partners). Normally one would hire the large firm as the prime contractor, and the others as subcontractors. But first, I made sure that I picked (local) firms that I believed were capable, (with) well-trained people, and (led by) top-notch engineers. They had advanced degrees from places like Illinois, MIT, (Michigan, Yale, et cetera), and they were as good as anybody else, but they just couldn't break into that system. (For the next job they could say,) "Yes, we have experience. We were joint venturer on this," which means that they had some of the management (experience) and broader responsibility for the job, not just the subcontract. So by doing that we were able to expand the list of qualified firms (that could) qualify for these large federal-aid projects. Many of them were highway projects but some of them (were) airport projects. So becoming (licensed) to me, was not much of a problem. After all, you take a test. If you pass it, you pass it. But once you get the license, can you get a job? Now that was a different question.

So the firms that were very large by Hawai'i standards [were] mostly *kama'āina* firms. And those firms---in fact, if you look at where they are today, you won't recognize them, at least in terms of who they are and what they do. I think if you look at the law firms, there are still some old law firms versus the new ones. But in engineering, I don't think you can detect the difference. Now everybody's based on their capabilities and their experience.

MK: So it was during Governor Burns' administration that the shift started occurring.

FM: Yes. Before then a few large firms got all the—not exclusive but they got all the good jobs, all

the big ones. So that was the governor's mandate to me. He gave me two instructions: one is to do that, raise the level of the profession; and second, he said, "You do the right thing. You leave politics to me." (Chuckles) I know I got him into a lot of political problems with legislators and (politicians). I didn't have to contend with that side of it. I still had to deal with them, and I tried to answer their questions or their objections. But in making my decision, I didn't have to worry about what the political consequence (might be). That's the governor's (*kuleana*). (Chuckles)

MK: Again I'm going to shift gears. I'm going to bring you back a little bit, but that was very interesting. And I think when we get into the DOT period, we're going to get more into your relationship with the governor, his philosophy, your philosophy and how it affected transportation and engineering firms. But just before we get into that, I'm going to move you back to the time that you came back to UH Mānoa. First of all, I was wondering how did you hear about the opening at UH?

FM: You know, I don't quite remember. I think I applied. (Pause) When I first got out I wrote to several universities including the University of Hawai'i. And at that time the university said they didn't have any openings, as I recall. And I was offered jobs at a couple of other places including my alma mater, Rose Poly. I didn't apply there but my professor, Leo McClain, wrote and said, "Would you like to come back to Rose to teach?" And Rose is an excellent teaching institution but I felt that there were limited research opportunities. At MIT and Illinois there were good research opportunities, so I stayed at MIT and then shifted to Illinois. But when I was at Illinois during the first year there I got a letter or call or something saying there's a job [at UH], do you want it? So I went back.

MK: Was it a hard decision or easy decision for you?

FM: Easy. 'Cause my wife didn't like Illinois. (Chuckles) And I wanted to go home also. So as I said, if it were the University [of Hawai'i] I was willing to go back even though, you know, cut in pay and all that. But if it were, say, just an engineering firm asking for me to come and work for them I would have said no. Because I was having too much fun at Illinois.

MK: You've always stated that at UH there weren't the research opportunities that you could have had at, say, MIT or Illinois. What other concerns did you have about UH if any?

FM: Basically that having been to MIT and Illinois and experiencing the quality of people and the quality of the activity, I felt that UH was way behind. But realistically—and this was shortly after the war—universities throughout the country were booming. And so it was hard to get teachers, professors. And especially hard to get somebody to come to the University of Hawai'i to teach. So if the person met the basic credentials we were happy to get him. In fact—it's unthinkable today—but we had people on the faculty who only had bachelor's degrees. So there was a lot of work to do at the University of Hawai'i. I thought what we could do was to upgrade people, meaning hire people with Ph.D.'s. And to get the people involved in research—because I thought that would stimulate them. When I (became) department chairman, I was able to get one new position. And at that time in the Department of Engineering, everyone taught a full load, meaning (twelve credits). And sometimes if an extra section (was needed) because there were too many students, you taught (fifteen credits). So you didn't have time to do research. So even though I encouraged people to do research, realistically they didn't have time. So (when we got the) one position, instead of hiring

somebody to fill that position I basically cut it up into four pieces and said to the faculty, "I will give you a teaching load reduction if you'll do research." So, say, if your normal load is four courses, you need to teach only three but do research the remaining time. And the course that I take away I would use this vacant position to hire a temporary or part-time person. And guess what? I couldn't talk anyone into doing that. Nobody wanted to do research.

So (I decided to) bring in somebody. I got a young Ph.D. from MIT named Joe Antebi (to come) to Hawai'i and I told him that he had to teach, I forget, two or three, I forget how many. But anyway, not the full load. And the rest of the time to do research. So he started to do his research, whatever he was doing at MIT. He was just a brand-new Ph.D. so he could continue with what he was doing. And from there, gradually people got used to the idea that you could do research (and teach). And then as we hired new Ph.D.'s—I think the next Ph.D. was Art [Arthur N.L.] Chu who got his [doctorate] degree from University of Florida, as I recall. He started doing research on wind loads on structures. We had another Ph.D. who wasn't really interested in research. But others who came with or went to get Ph.D.'s started to build up the research program. So the College of Engineering today is much different from what it was when I (started) there. And if you look at, say, electrical engineering for example, it's an excellent (department). Their graduates are highly sought after by Mainland high-technology firms. Because they really put out a good product; they're well trained. But interestingly—I was just talking to Paul Yuen the other day who's the dean of [the College of] Engineering—the reason Hawai'i kids are so highly sought after is not only that they're bright—you know, they're just as bright as, say, other kids—but they work hard and they're loyal. So when they hire a kid from some other place, lot of these guys they just go from one job to another. Wherever, you know, when they get more money they jump. The Hawai'i kids don't do that. They work hard, they're loyal and they produce. So it's a combination of good education and, I would say, the cultural trait of the people of Hawai'i.

MK: That's good to hear.

FM: Yes.

WN: When you were advocating research among the faculty, did you specify any type of research or any specific topics that needed to be explored? Or was it just research per se with seeing the value of the combination of teaching . . .

FM: Yes, it's just the idea that here is a faculty member trying to discover something that nobody else had done before. So when Joe joined us, I didn't tell him, "We want you to do this kind of research or that kind of research." [I said,] "Do whatever you're interested in, just do it."

MK: I was wondering, why was your staff so reluctant to go into research? They were going to have relief time to do it, one less course . . .

FM: Probably, I think, lack of experience. Some of the people had, as I said, only bachelor's degrees. I didn't expect them to do research because they really had no background for it. But even in their case they could have. As it turned out, one of the guys with us—I think he may have had a master's [degree], maybe not—but later, much later, he got interested in research and he did some very interesting, innovative things. And it was quite successful. But others, they were comfortable in teaching. They kept one step ahead of the students. You know, you have a textbook, they read it and explain the textbook. But nothing that they can relate to in

terms of their own personal discovery or own personal creation in terms of a system that they designed and put in, and things like that. But see, if we didn't have a research program we couldn't attract the people who wanted to do research. Like Joe Antebi would never have come to the University of Hawai'i had I not offered him an opportunity to do research as well as teach.

MK: That research opportunity, was that with the engineering experiment station or is that something completely separate?

FM: That was within the department of civil engineering. The engineering experiment station was created to take it one step further. See, the problem within the department was that we didn't have money to support research. And the number of faculty members basically was determined on how many students, how many courses you had to teach. So the engineering experiment station was a way to create an organization and funding which could be used to attract research money or money from the legislature or money from private firms who needed to get certain things done. And then taking those [opportunities] and then offering these to the faculty. So, say, if a full-time faculty member could be supported by half-time research through the experiment station, then we could hire more people. The experiment station idea is not new because the college of agriculture [College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources], basically has that system. And other universities have experiment stations. So we were just trying to basically model UH after successful research enterprises at other universities.

WN: Was that considered radical at the University of Hawai'i at that time? I mean, were you looked upon as being someone—as a rabble-rouser or an innovator or anything at that time?

FM: Gee, I don't know. Because of my background I just felt that these things needed to be done. Fortunately I had a dean who was very supportive, [Wilfred] Jasper Holmes. And he supported me in these ideas.

MK: Nowadays there's a lot of pressure on professors to teach but also do research. You have to do research, you have to publish. In those days, then, the pressures were not on research at all, then?

FM: Not in the College of Engineering. In other areas there might have been more of a research focus but I would say the university as a whole in those days was still very backward. So I'm not aware of any of my professors outside of the College of Engineering really being involved in research. Ken Watanabe and maybe another guy named Chris Gregory in mathematics were a couple of exceptions. The person who taught physics to us—you know, very important subject for engineers and scientists—as far as I knew didn't do any research. Today it would be unthinkable to have a physics professor that doesn't do research.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: I know back in your time you had Wilfred [Jasper] Holmes, dean of engineering, and later he

went into administration, yeah?

FM: Yes.

MK: And later he went into administration, dean of administration and I think vice president. What are your memories of Dr. Holmes?

FM: Oh, he was a wonderful gentleman. He was a naval officer. He had a side to him that I found out later which was fascinating. He used to write novels for the *Saturday Evening Post*. It was a side of him that I didn't know he had. Because I saw him as, well, he was a submarine officer during the war, and in the intelligence side. But as a dean of engineering he, like all deans, he had to make tough decisions. But again, I was very fortunate. He and I got along very well and he supported my ideas. So I thought he was a good dean. He was a broad-gauged person. He wasn't a bureaucrat. He wasn't *manini*, you know, so. Good man.

MK: Also before we continue on the topic of your years at UH, I know that you were very interested in research so during the years that you were associated with UH, '55-'63, I was wondering what type of research were you able to pursue during those years?

FM: Well after I finished my contract, I tried to do some research on my own but I was looking for sponsors. I could, say, just do research on my own, but the kind of research that I was interested in I couldn't do, because I didn't have the facilities and I didn't have the—well, basically, I was too far removed from the scene. I guess I could have shifted my focus to other fields of research. I was somewhat interested in shifting toward, say, earthquake engineering. But rather than try to do something that's going to be very difficult to do—because really, if I wanted to do earthquake engineering or earthquake research I would have had to move to [University of California at] Berkeley or places like that where they had excellent programs. And I had some good friends from MIT who went through the same protective construction route with us, ahead of me, who were involved in earthquake research at Berkeley. So I would have probably attempted there. But I didn't want to leave Hawai'i. So I said, what can I do in Hawai'i but not stagnate? So that's when I decided that I would go into the profession. Learn something about it. Because obviously I had a lot to learn and I could get involved in interesting projects, sometimes.

Excuse me, somebody's trying to get ahold of me. Excuse me.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-21-6-96

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Honolulu, O'ahu

October 14, 1996

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the University of Hawai'i presidents oral history project on Monday, October 14, 1996, and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto. This is session number six.

MK: Okay, this is our sixth session. And the last session we were discussing your [teaching] years at the UH, 1955 to 1963. And what I'd like to do is continue with that period. You were saying that at that time, there wasn't that much research going on in your field at UH.

FM: Right.

MK: And you were learning more about engineering as a profession . . .

FM: Right.

MK: . . . and sharing what you learned with your students.

FM: Right.

MK: As a teacher, I was wondering what were your feelings about teaching?

FM: Oh, I loved teaching. I enjoyed teaching, I enjoyed challenging the students. So my courses were not easy. (Chuckles) But I enjoyed the process and working with the students.

MK: And in those days, what did you perceive as the students' needs?

FM: Well I was focused on the engineering courses, but because of my Mainland experience I generally felt that the local kids needed to improve in terms of communication in the classroom. And I thought that'd be important when they got out into the profession. Because in class and out of class, they just are relating to each other, so they're very comfortable with their style of communication. But when you get out into the profession, you'd be working with all kinds of people. So the communication aspect, compared to the Mainland students that I worked with and the Mainland graduate students that I worked with, they were—I could communicate with them, but I could see the difference between their communication methods.

But in terms of their ability to understand and do the engineering work, they were very good. They were equal to any of the students that I knew on the Mainland.

MK: So how did you kind of address that need?

FM: Primarily by trying to engage them into conversations, discussions. So in my class I tried not to just lecture because anyway, I'm a dull lecturer, (chuckles) so if I lectured they'd fall asleep. So you ask questions, get them to (think), get up on the board and explain what to do, which is sort of the method that I was exposed to at—at least by some of the good instructors at Rose-Hulman [Institute of Technology], Rose Poly [as it was then known]; and MIT. MIT, it was graduate level so there was much more of that. But even at the undergraduate level at Rose-Hulman, you know, they ask a question, you gotta go up and write on the board and explain so, you know. That was helpful for me, I think.

MK: You were mentioning that you were probably a hard professor back then. If you look back and you kind of look at the grades you used to give out, how did the grades come out?

FM: From my point of view or from the students' point of view? (Chuckles)

MK: Oh, both sides.

FM: Okay, well, engineering is a very difficult discipline. At the time, as I recall, to be able to get a bachelor's from the university was 120 credit hours. Fifteen per semester, four years adds up to 120. For us, for engineering students there were about, as I recall, eighteen per semester, so three times eight, twenty-four more. So instead of 120 it's 144 credits to get a bachelor's degree, which meant that the students had to work very hard. And that included laboratory hours so they also had to work long. I tended to stress the fundamentals, and if they couldn't get the fundamentals they flunked out. I think it would be an act of kindness, actually, than to try to nurse 'em along and then having to flunk them in their senior year. That'd be, I think, a real injustice. So in the first two years you got your mathematics, and physics and stuff. And those were taught by others. But from the junior year they started the engineering courses, and those are the ones that we taught. I taught one of the first courses in engineering, well, several. There are about two or three that are very fundamental, called engineering mechanics. That's basically physics applied to engineering situations. And if they couldn't do that then either they would flunk out before they graduate, after they put in two more years, or they'd get into a job and (wouldn't) understand what's going on and (would) hurt themselves or hurt some other people. So I had to be hard-nosed on those. So a fair number of students flunked. Then they transferred to business and became business majors and became rich.

(Laughter)

WN: Oh, we better not show this to the dean of the business school.

(Laughter)

MK: When you were a student, you were saying that there were some professors, like Kenichi Watanabe, that had a real impact on you.

FM: Yes.

MK: In your long years as a professor, were there students who felt that you had an impact on them?

FM: I don't know because, of course, I wasn't their only teacher. But a number of our graduates—and I don't take credit for these because some of them I'd had very little contact with, actually—but there were some students who went on and did very well. Ed Hirata was one of my students and Kazu Hayashida. George Nishimura, who is not too well known, but he's a very competent structural engineer. So there are people who did very well and many of them went on to graduate schools. Like Ed Hirata went to University of Illinois, as I recall, got a master's degree and did well there. So as I say, I don't claim credit for that because I got Ed Hirata in his senior year when I first started teaching. He had just one or two classes from me, some of the more advanced courses. But the students, those who passed generally did very well. Even those—in fact, I won't mention names but some of these people who from the academic side were okay to marginal turned out to be very good engineers and also very good businessmen to the extent that they succeeded not only professionally but businesswise. You might say it was a pleasant surprise. (Chuckles) And some of the others who were very bright also did well professionally but not businesswise. So it takes a different kind of a talent maybe to be successful in business. And engineering is a business and it's a profession. You have clients, you don't succeed by losing money on each job, right? But whether I had any impact on any students, I don't know. They all tell me I was too difficult.

(Laughter)

FM: But they're all my good friends now.

MK: Another thing I was wondering about is that as a professor did you also take on duties advising or counseling?

FM: Oh yes, oh yes. We didn't have student advisors separate and apart from the faculty at that time. You took on the job of being faculty advisor, guiding the students in what courses to take in order to complete your program. And in those days, everybody tried to finish in four years. We didn't have the luxury of taking five, six, seven years to get a bachelor's degree. So it was relatively easy counseling. We also had a fairly rigid program, so if you wanted to get your degree in four years you pretty much had to be lockstep. A secondary benefit of that, though, is that you had a very strong cohort system. Everybody took the same classes. There were a few electives at the end but by and large you were in the same classes. But we all, I mean the students all worked together and played together and so helped each other.

MK: Was that something that was kind of facilitated or promoted by the department? That working together?

FM: Well, sometimes we'd have projects you'd have to form teams to do. In the laboratories especially, where the students are given projects to do, usually you can't do it by yourself. You're working with big machinery, somebody has to run the machine, somebody has to take the records or make the measurements and they all get together and try to write a report. So teamwork was, in many cases, a necessity. And as I said, because of the very rigid, almost—I guess in today's terms—unreasonable demands, 144 credit hours for a bachelor's degree is—I'm sure there'd be a student (chuckles) sit-in or something if you tried to pull that today. And if you wanted to do that in four years, you pretty much had to keep in step. So there's

very little flexibility. I think when you're in a group and you're suffering, you establish a bond. I felt that was a good feature. It wasn't by design but that's the way it turned out.

MK: And I know that you became [department] chair in 1960, 1963 . . .

FM: I forget, yes, something like that.

MK: And I was wondering, in those days how did one become chair? I know different departments have different ways of getting their [department] chairs.

FM: The dean asked me to be chair. (Chuckles)

MK: And what was your reaction when you were asked to be chair?

FM: I said, "I can't do that." Because at that time I was teaching only part time. After I worked with Alfred Yee and K. D. Park, Park & Yee split up and so I had the choice of either staying with Al Yee or K.D. Park, both of whom are very good friends. I didn't want to take sides. So I said, well, I'll go start my own firm. And I started my own firm which, of course, demanded a lot of time. And it was moderately successful. So I (had to) do that on a full-time basis. That's when I resigned from the university. (After) one year (the department) asked me to come [back] and teach a course. They really needed the help so I (agreed to) teach a course. And then, I think, the next semester they asked me if I could teach two courses. And I really couldn't without hiring somebody, so I wrote to an old friend of mine who had a master's degree from Illinois to come and join me. So he came over and between him and me, we—and a young graduate that I hired—were able to do that little bit of engineering that we were doing. And it was after that (Dean Holmes) asked me to be [department] chairman, so I said, "I can't do that, I'm only part time." But as I said, [Wilfred] Jasper Holmes was a good friend by then. So my solution to that was if I'm going to be chairman, I would basically have to be full time. You know, can't do that part time. And yet my business demanded attention because I've got clients out there that deserve that. And so I got in touch with my old Rose Poly classmate, Don Shimazu, who had his own firm also. Don also has a master's from Illinois and his partner was Roy Shimabukuro who also, as I recall, was at Illinois. And Howard, the guy that I brought in from Illinois, knew these people, they went to the same school. So we joined together to form what was then SMS. That's Shimazu, Matsuda & Shimabukuro, with the understanding that I would not be able to be involved in the day-to-day work because I would be spending most of my time at the university. And they were satisfied with that. So we formed this new firm and then I was able to serve as chairman.

MK: So just being asked to become a chair of the department had grave (chuckles) repercussions for you.

FM: Yes, I couldn't do that part time.

MK: And you were asked to chair by a good friend, Dr. Holmes, and you accepted the position.

FM: I don't think there was a faculty vote on that.

(Laughter)

MK: What were your duties as chair?

FM: Well, as chair, for example—I told you the last time—I tried to foster research. I was able to get that extra position for research, brought in Joe Antebi and these sort of things I could do to stimulate. Other than that it was sort of routine stuff. You decide how many [course] sections [to offer] based on student enrollment, you know, the different kinds of courses, and assign them to the professors. And you tried to be fair and you try to spread the work in a way that would be fair. But once in a while we need more sections. Then I'd have to ask somebody to teach a fifth course. Which they were willing to do—I can't recall anyone grumbling about it. They knew the necessity because these courses were problems heavy. In other words, you don't just lecture, you give problems. And in those days we'd correct the problems. And because what you lecture the next time depends upon what was taught the previous time, unless you give out problems to do, homework to do, and correct them, the students will really get lost if they didn't get the previous lesson. So it was a very rigorous curriculum not only for the students but for the teachers. You know, you can't correct homework and return it a month later like you can do an essay, or something. Because the next (chuckles) lesson depended on the previous one.

So it was to keep those things going. And in those days, the curriculum was relatively static, nothing really exciting happened. So on the teaching side it was just basically coping with increasing enrollment which was taking place at that time, and hiring faculty, asking for money. I still don't know why Dean Holmes asked me to come back. But maybe he felt that I could inject some new approaches. Because certainly, no one there was interested in, I guess, at that time, doing research. Now lot of people are.

MK: You were chair then, and I think at that same time, you were involved with the Engineering Experiment Station, and earlier you had explained what it was. And I was wondering, at the time you left in '63, by that time what was the state of that Engineering Experiment Station?

FM: It had just been authorized and funded. There was some discussion about the concept and how we would do that. And engineering experiment stations typically would have hired staff. You hire people to do the research. But I felt that—my thought was that the Engineering Experiment Station would be the vehicle to get the faculty involved in research. So rather than full-time researchers, we would create positions then do basically what I tried to do with Joe Antebi on a broader scale. To try to involve instead of just one or two people, try to involve the whole college. And, of course, we needed to bring in one or two people with fresh ideas and then maybe get others to join them. But anyway, it had a twofold purpose. One is to serve the local engineering and business community with services that, say, the teaching faculty couldn't provide. And the other side of the coin is using this kind of opportunity to enrich and upgrade the faculty by getting them involved—if not in the kind of, say, high-level research that an MIT would do, at least on a professional (application) level, get involved. You know, like if something happened to a building downtown, go in and look at it and see what happened and assist the people, the professional, the practitioners of engineering to try to understand what's going on, run some tests, things like that. But as I recall, the idea of an experiment station was just authorized, and I think there was funding initially only for the director to kind of flesh that idea out, and then we'd go in for more money. So (the dean) asked me to become head of the experiment station, and [department] chairman at the same time. (Chuckles) So I had to continue as chairman and then to try to lay out the plan. But I think shortly after I was appointed, I shifted over to the state [as director of Department of

Transportation], so I really didn't accomplish anything.

MK: And so after you left, what happened to the Engineering Experiment Station?

FM: Well, nothing. When I left, I left with the idea that I was going to take a two-year leave of absence [to work for the state]. And I basically saw that as an (obligation) for public service. So although my basic career is in academia, I take two years off to do my public service and then come back to the university. So I didn't resign from the university, I just took leave of absence. And I think the idea was that I would come back and do that again, so they just sort of—I'm not sure about this, but as I understand it, nothing much happened in the experiment station. And of course, I didn't come back, so I really don't know what happened to it. Much later, I think they changed that name to Engineering Research Institute. But that was just a change in name, I don't think substance (chuckles) changed any. And I think, also, the nature of research changed at the university so that the research was much more departmental rather than through a separate research institute.

MK: And you know that Engineering Experiment Station, did it have physical facilities?

FM: No.

MK: No facilities.

FM: It's what we would call today a virtual laboratory. And so people—that was one of the contentions. "What do you mean an experiment station without a laboratory?"

I said, "Well, we can't afford a separate laboratory, but we have laboratories that are used for classroom purposes." And we don't need to hire new people, although, I guess I thought that we may need to hire one or two just to get it going. But we had the faculty who are trained, and this is just a matter of getting their thinking broadened to include not just students but the community. And so we could get an engineering experiment station going with very little initial outlay, if only we can get the people to get involved in it. I don't know whether it ever worked or not, (chuckles) but I thought it was worth a try.

WN: Was the community service function something unique? Or was that, in other words, getting away just from the four walls of the university and teaching students and trying to get out into the community, do more applied kinds of things. Was that your idea?

FM: No, it's not mine by any means. At the University of Illinois there was a place called Talbot Laboratory. That's a very famous laboratory. It was used for research, but also it did what would be considered sponsored research now, where the (Portland Cement) Association, for example, would give the University of Illinois money to do research on concrete or some steel company would ask them to (test structural steel components). And at the same time, faculty and graduate students will do research on their own even though nobody's paying them to do it. So it's really trying to take engineering from the textbook into the laboratory and into the practice. That transition. And I thought that was lacking in Hawai'i because we were just in classroom teaching, graduating students, sending them out into the world, and then they have to learn about how the professionals really practiced. So it's nothing new with me.

WN: Did you take any contracts?

FM: No. As I say (it was) on paper only, when I was there.

MK: Did you see that back then as a potential for generating more funds?

FM: Uh, yeah. The idea is that if there were problems that were, say, unique to Hawai'i—and you know, because these were small problems, you couldn't get large laboratories to do that kind of work for you unless you paid them. Nobody could afford that. But if it were local, then some contractor could say, "I'm having a problem with this, can you look at it for us?" And then we'd run some tests, write a report, give it to him, might just charge him for materials or whatever. But it was not so much to make money as such—we had to make enough to fund it—but it was more as community service as well as faculty enhancement.

MK: Sounds real good.

FM: I thought it was a good idea.

(Laughter)

FM: It didn't work, though. You know, good ideas sometimes don't work.

WN: Did you have to go out in the community to sell this idea? Did you do any lobbying to the legislature or anything like that?

FM: No, I just lobbied the dean, and he carried the ball.

MK: Back in those days, were you involved in any campus-faculty politics?

FM: No. (Chuckles)

MK: Thought I'd ask.

FM: I was totally disinterested in that sort of thing.

MK: And during that same period, like you were also in private practice, you told us the reason why you went into that facet of engineering. I was wondering, with that company of Shimazu, Matsuda & Shimabukuro what types of jobs did you folks generally take on?

FM: We did, basically, work for architects. Architects that design, say, a multi-story building need structural engineers to design the building, to make it safe (and meet legal requirements). That's basically our bread and butter.

MK: Back in those days were you involved in contracts that involved, by then, the state?

FM: No.

MK: Just do private industry-type jobs, then.

FM: Yes. Would you excuse me just a minute?

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

FM: . . . jobs, no, we didn't—I guess I didn't know how to get state jobs.

(Laughter)

FM: I know that when I worked for Al Yee, he had worked in the [U.S.] Navy before he joined K. D. Park. And so he used to get a lot of navy jobs. But I'm not aware of us getting state jobs. As I said earlier, most of the state jobs were being given to these well-established firms, which SMS was certainly not one.

MK: You were mentioning earlier that some of the engineering graduates, when they come out of college, they're not too well prepared to deal with the more business or entrepreneurial aspects of the field. With your situation where you came out of college, did mostly research, some teaching, when you first got into it, how did you fare?

FM: Not well, I think. Of course, I knew the engineering, but I didn't know how to negotiate fees, I didn't know really how to hire people or supervise them, you know, takes a different skill. Some people are natural at it. My case, I guess, I had to acquire that. Fortunately, my office was small enough—as I said there were only three of us. And maybe that shows how naive I was, that one person with a bachelor's, one person with a master's and one person with a Ph.D., no draftsman. (Chuckles) And in any engineering office, the engineers do the design but the draftsmen put it on paper. We did our own drafting, and so it wasn't well thought-out.

(Laughter)

WN: Was that the only job that Don Shimazu had? In other words, was he like you and had other jobs elsewhere?

FM: Don had, as I said, Roy Shimabukuro, and I think he had at least one draftsman. But he was better established than I was because he and Roy were both doing it full time and I was doing it part-time. But his was also a very young firm. And so when we joined forces we were still a very small firm.

MK: I know like, Don Shimazu's family was a growing family at that time, too right?

FM: Yes.

MK: You know, like four or five girls in the family . . .

FM: Right.

MK: . . . and you had your family with all these children. In those years, how did your family fare with your job as chair, your job as director of the Engineering Experiment Station, and also in private industry?

FM: I did pretty well. Well enough that when I took the state job I took about a 50 percent reduction in income to do that. That's why I say I (planned) to do just two years of public service.

(Laughter)

FM: I was doing okay. At that time, I was sending two kids to Punahou [School], which became very difficult when I took the state job.

MK: I think also, I read in an article that when you took the state job, you also gave up all your interest in your business.

FM: Yes, I had to sell my—we didn't have stocks as such—it was a partnership. But I gave up everything for two reasons. One is to protect myself so that I don't get into any sort of conflict situation. But also to, you might say, liberate my partners because if I kept the relationship I couldn't give them any jobs even if they're the best suited. And that (would have) turned out to be a substantial financial sacrifice (for the firm). When I said "yes" to Governor Burns I knew that I had to cut all those ties.

MK: I was wondering, with statehood coming in 1959, were there some changes that you noticed back then?

FM: In the university?

MK: In the university.

FM: I guess I actually started noticing it earlier than that. But, I mean the university that I left as a sophomore before I went to Mainland, and the university that I came back to (eight) years later was already quite different. There was a lot of talk about statehood, lot of anticipation of statehood. And maybe some apprehensions in other parts of the community. So changes were already happening. Of course, Jack Burns was in the middle of that, although I didn't know Jack Burns until much later. I knew that he was delegate to Congress, and all that. But he was just somebody you read about. He wasn't real to me until I started working for him.

MK: And then up to that point, like to 1963 were you in any way involved in politics?

FM: No. I (chuckles) had zero interest in politics. So I was totally surprised when Jack Burns asked me to work for him.

MK: I guess that we should ask you then, how did it come about that you ended up being DOT [state Department of Transportation] head, and did you apply, did he just call you to come in, or how did it happen?

WN: Let me turn the tape over.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: Short answer, I don't know.

(Laughter)

FM: No, but I've asked, you know, I mean I was curious. I think there are two possible answers. One is that one of my students' father was very active in Democratic politics. And one version is that he recommended to Jack Burns that he consider me. And the other is that Dan [Daniel K.] Inouye, who grew up together [with FM], suggested to Jack Burns that, "You've got a young MIT Ph.D. on the university staff. Why don't you consider him?" Now, they may have both been true. I've never asked Dan nor this other person. But somebody obviously recommended me. Because I certainly didn't apply. That was farthest from my thoughts as I was interested in the faculty and the experiment station, and my business with SMS was prospering. So it was a real problem for me when the governor asked me to serve. In fact, the first time I met Jack Burns was when we had breakfast at Like Like Drive Inn [Restaurant]. He asked me to come talk to him. And even though I didn't know exactly what he wanted to talk about, I had a suspicion because, I think somebody—maybe it was Matsy [Matsuo] Takabuki—but somebody close to the governor called me for my resume. Which wasn't very long, you know. (Chuckles) I mean, Pohukaina School, Washington [Intermediate School], McKinley [High School], University [of Hawai'i], Rose Poly, MIT, two years of research, and stuff like that. But anyway, I think the governor basically had the idea that the university was a resource. And he wanted to take people from the university to put them into his cabinet. So he selected three people: Shelley [M.] Mark, Ken [Kenneth K.] Otagaki and myself in his first cabinet. I understand that Shelly was active in Democratic politics. And I don't know whether Ken Otagaki was active or not, he's a 100th [Infantry] Battalion veteran, and so he may have been active through the 100th. And of course, I was 442nd [Regimental Combat Team] but as I told you earlier, I was sort of (chuckles) outcast, exiled or whatever.

(Laughter)

FM: But to be fair, it was more self-imposed in the sense that my friends in the 232nd [Combat Engineer Company] that I spent a few months with, and some of whom were good friends of mine, would always welcome me and ask me to come join them [socially]. And I did a few times, but they had all these wonderful stories to talk about of their adventure and the hardship and carousing, whatever. And I wasn't part of it. So all I could talk about was the basic training, but basic training was just a short episode for them. The real stuff that they reminisced about was the battlefield stuff. So I sort of drifted away from it. So anyway, I wasn't active at all.

MK: So when Burns called you to meet him at Like Like Drive Inn [Restaurant], you had some inkling as to why he was calling you.

FM: Except I didn't know what job—because he was forming a cabinet, and you know, there were stories in the paper. And when he called me I assumed that he was going to ask me if I'm interested in something. But I had no idea what that would be. With my inexperience at that time—although I hadn't really thought about it, just sort of thinking about it now—I wouldn't have been surprised to be (offered) a deputy-level cabinet office. But anyway, when he asked me if I would serve as the director of transportation, I was more surprised than anything else.

WN: Did he offer it to you at that meeting, at that lunch?

FM: Yes. Breakfast.

WN: Breakfast.

FM: Yes.

MK: I was wondering, how did that conversation go between the two of you?

FM: It was very awkward.

(Laughter)

FM: 'Cause, you know, he's a very stern person and he's—he doesn't know how to turn on the charm. He wasn't trying to woo me or persuade me, or anything. He said, "Would you do this?"

And I said, "I don't know, let me think about it." (Chuckles) But that first encounter was not a warm, pleasant experience. You know, I didn't go home and say, "Guess what! Governor Burns asked me. . . ." I kind of said, "Now, what do I do?"

(Laughter)

FM: Of course later, I found out the real Jack Burns. And I'm so glad I made the decision I did. But anyway, I thought the opportunity to be of some service to this community and to learn about something that I'd never done before was attractive enough. So then I consulted my friends, Jasper Holmes was one of them, and my friend in Indiana that I was in the army with, and some of my closer friends. And they all thought that it's something that I should do. And as I indicated earlier, that was going to be at a substantial financial sacrifice. The university had a policy then that you may take a leave of absence for two years, but after that you (have to) come back. So I said, okay, I'll do it for two years. And there was precedence because Bill Wachter—I think he was the chairman of the department—served in the same capacity for two years and then came back to the university. So I had that as a precedent. But as it turned out, after two years I found that I really couldn't leave. The job demanded a lot more than I had been able to give it (because) of my experience and knowledge and, you know, sort of serving an apprenticeship. (Chuckles) And I was by then involved in some controversy and I couldn't just walk away from it. So I asked for one year extension to my leave which the board [of regents] granted. But they said this is the last one, you know, last year. So the fourth year I didn't even ask, I just resigned [from the University of Hawai'i]. And, of course, by then I had tenure, but that was not a consideration at all. I wanted to go back to the university because I loved the university, the work and working with the students and the research and all that. And it wasn't because I had a secure tenured job there. That wasn't a consideration. Of course, I was young then so it didn't matter if I. . . . (Chuckles) Only when you get older you worry about security.

MK: I was wondering, what was Amy's reaction to . . .

FM: Oh, she was wonderful. She said, "Whatever you want to do." She'll support me. For her it meant a tremendous sacrifice. She used to sew and mend the girls' dresses (to economize. Our younger children all wore hand-me-downs from the older kids, but they were always neatly dressed.) So she was very frugal. And she managed the household very well. So whatever I earned she was able to manage. We talked about this just the other day, and the kids were

saying that they never felt that we were poor. And we were. But when we were at MIT, I think we were living on something like, I think she made seventy bucks [\$70] a month and I got ninety bucks [\$90], from the GI Bill. (Chuckles) So we lived on it and saved some money. So she's a wonderful manager of a home. She took it in stride. She never once grumbled about it.

MK: So you decided to take the DOT job, and I know that there were, like, three major divisions in DOT; highways, airports and harbors. And the other night I was trying to figure out, how were we going to cover all that, you know, ten years on all of that. And I thought we might do it this way. If you could recall, say, in each division, what you perceived as the major needs of that division during your tenure.

FM: Okay.

MK: And then later we can see to what extent you thought you were able to meet the needs.

FM: Okay, well. The Department of Transportation was created shortly before I came on board. Before then there were three separate agencies: the highways division, or highways department; board of harbor commissioners, a separate entity; and the airports commission. I think those three autonomous agencies were collapsed into one department after the reorganization act that passed after statehood. They created eighteen departments so that all these (agencies) were collapsed into one. So when I got in, there existed on paper a department of transportation which, in fact, were still running as if they were separate organizations. So from the management point of view, one of the biggest problems was to try to pull this together to get them to operate as if they were one department.

The solution that I came up with is to try to consolidate certain activities, make it departmental rather than separate, divisional. And the job was too big for just one department head so I asked for deputies to help me. And most people felt that I would use those deputies, you know, one for airports, one for harbors and one for highways. But I said, no, that's not what I wanted. I wanted functional deputies; one deputy to take care of all the financial matters. Each division were by law supposed to be self-supporting. So, say, the harbors division had to generate its revenues out of harbor activity. We couldn't use highways money to run the harbors and vice versa. So we would have to go out and borrow money—(go to the) bond market to sell harbor revenue bonds or sell airport revenue bonds. We had to negotiate contracts (with users and tenants), and I felt that those things can be done more effectively across the board. So whoever does the harbor revenue could also do an airport revenue bond, et cetera. Whereas if you had three divisions, each (division had) to learn how to do that. So I insisted on functional deputies. And at that time (few people) agreed with me, but I was the department head, so. (Chuckles) But the legislature gave me hard time. They wanted me to appoint basically division heads. And I said, "No, we've got civil service division heads. They're the professionals. They stay there and they know how to run each department." But in terms of management I wanted functional control. So I had one for finance, one for programs, you know, dealing with the federal government or the state legislature, and scheduling the CIP [capital improvements]-type projects which was heavy for Department of Transportation, and the third deputy was for operations, you know, we have to operate these facilities. That means you have to deal with lease rentals and lease agreements, dealing with personnel problems, our administration. So I cut (the administration) up in that way. So that was one of the large issues that I had to deal with. How to actually create a cohesive unit out of three independent

departments. Okay, so that was sort of overall.

So starting with the airports division, the airports division had two big problems. One was the basic—it was a financial problem. How do you build and operate the airports for the state of Hawai'i? Because we had a contract with the airlines which basically said that they [the airlines] will pay, through landing fees, whatever was needed to build Honolulu International Airport. Naturally, that's where they fly, okay. And the previous administration had gotten them to agree that they will pay in addition, something like \$740,000 a year to support the neighbor island airports. But that was the limit of their support. And Jack Burns was—he'd say, "You know, you gotta develop the neighbor islands. We can't just keep moving people and jobs and industry from the neighbor islands to Honolulu." And I felt that the airports on the neighbor islands were a key to a statewide coordinated development. But how do you build an airport system on the neighbor islands? Because if you apply the same theory, you're going to let Aloha [Airlines] and Hawaiian [Airlines] build these airports? No way. There's no way that they can (pay for) these airports. Interisland travel would be prohibitive if they had to (pay for) it. So I had to convince the overseas carriers, not just American carriers but the foreign carriers as well, that it's in their best interest and certainly in our best interest if we developed a total airport system for the state. And that they had to pay for everything.

And we were on the brink of lawsuits several (chuckles) years, because I would impose landing fees based on that concept. And they would kick and scream and threaten lawsuit. And I would say, no, that we were a (sovereign) state so we have to do what we think is right. And we have the power to impose these landing fees. And I tried to really persuade them, though, that it's to their best interest for the islands to be developed as a whole because they're going to bring passengers who come to Honolulu but then are also going on to the neighbor islands. And if they cannot go to the neighbor islands they won't have as many passengers. You know, how many times do you want to come to Waikiki, right? So eventually they gave in on that. And so we designed an airport financing system where whatever we say we need they have a right to review. At one point they said, "Okay, we'll do it but we want veto power."

And I said, "No, that's the same as not having it." So they have the right to review, which they should. They're going to pay for it and they're the ones that can say, we need it, or we don't. But they (tended to be) very short sighted. Like, they were thinking about the next (year) instead of ten years down the road. Whatever we do the legislature has to authorize, so they had an appeal to the legislature. If we were being unreasonable, (I would) say, you can go appeal to the legislature.

So that was a major issue. How do you finance a statewide system. And the second issue was when I came on board in 1963, we had just finished Honolulu International Airport, a new Honolulu International Airport. In fact, we were involved in the dedication. (Chuckles) The previous administration did the work but we got the credit.

(Laughter)

FM: Shortly after (the dedication), The Boeing Company announced that they're going to build the 747. And the biggest airplane up until that point was a DC-8 (with a capacity for about) 180 passengers.

WN: It was still one aisle, I think.

FM: Yes, narrow body. It's a wonderful airplane but that's like having a—you design a lagoon to handle canoes and all of a sudden a steamer is going to come into that lagoon, right. So we had to upgrade the facility and that changed, of course, our financial requirements. And, of course, we had to upgrade everything. We had two problems: one was the announced schedule that Pan Am [Pan American World Airways] was going to start flying the 747 in 1969, as I recall. And then the transpacific route case, when all of a sudden we had about seven new airlines coming into Hawai'i. And they were coming not only to Honolulu but to Hilo as well. How do you prepare for the arrival of half a dozen or more new airlines serving Hawai'i? And, you know, they need gate position and lounges, they need the full support system. So we had to gear up to meet those two challenges, two deadlines to meet. And that was a major task. How do you organize the department to accomplish that? And I decided you can't. I mean, the department or the airports division could not, by any stretch of my imagination handle that task the way it had been done in the past. This was a whole new system that had to be done. You had to change the entire fueling system because instead of using, say, buckets to fuel the airplane, now you gotta bring tankers. The whole scale changed. So we had to redesign the entire airport, Honolulu [International] Airport, to be ready for the jumbo jet age.

WN: So in essence, then, when the new airport was built, it was obsolete.

FM: Oh yes. So I had to go back to the legislature and say, "I hate to tell you this, but the airport that we just finished, this beautiful new airport, is obsolete. Boeing's 747s are coming." They didn't even know how to steer that airplane. The pilot was going to be up around (three) stories high. The nose of the airplane is so high that the airlines were wondering, how do you steer these darn things because the pilot is up front, the front wheels are back here and (chuckles) the thing is (as long as a) football field. And how strong the pavement has to be. It changed the entire airport. And up until that time—it's kind of hard to imagine—but Honolulu Airport was designed without any loading ramps. Everything—you climbed steps to get into the airplane. And then we had a big argument about what kind of loading ramp are we were going to use. And of course other airports had them. But United Airlines came in with a brand new idea that they're going to have a loading ramp that's going to go over the wing. And everybody thought it was a crazy idea, and it was a crazy idea (chuckles) so it was abandoned. And some of these things are long-lead items, so before we even knew exactly what the airport was going to look like, we were ordering these components because if you're going to have it by 1969 and you had maybe a three-year lead time, you gotta order it in 1966. So the whole approach to this project was different from the old traditional way we used to do things.

And that's when I brought in the Mainland consultants to take this as a system problem to look at the entire system and to orchestrate it in such a way that at the end you'll have a finished terminal with everything supporting that operation. And the problem was made even more difficult because in places like Denver you do this by moving the whole airport. You go to an empty field and you build a whole new airport. Well, in Honolulu there's no place you can do that. You have to operate a busy airport, a brand-new obsolete airport, at the same time build a new one in its place. So the logistical problems of how do you build something without stopping the operation was a tremendous problem.

WN: And I would imagine you'd have to increase landing fees.

FM: We were the highest. At one time in the United States we had the highest landing fees. But it didn't bother me. (Chuckles)

WN: And all the other airlines coming in, was that part of the airline deregulation?

FM: No, at that time it was highly regulated yet. Because they had to go to the CAB [Civil Aeronautics Board] to get the filings and they would argue back and forth, why they need it [i.e., routes to and from Hawai'i] and what they can do for air travel, et cetera. And CAB granted quite a few of these requests. But anyway, that was the major issue. From my point of view, how you solve the problem as to who gets what job is a second-order problem. The first-order problem was who can manage the whole thing. And I was sure that we, the department, or airports division, cannot. And none of the local consultants had the experience, knowledge for dealing with such a complex problem. Because they're local consultants, even the big ones' [experience] was more just project by project. You build a bridge or you build a pier or something. So when I finally decided that's the only way we can do it I had to go see the governor because of what he said earlier, to develop the local capabilities. And I told him that on this one, if we tried to do it the way that we would normally do with, say, our Kahului [Maui] Airport, for example, we're going to miss the target and there's no way we're going to make it. And the big airplanes are going to come in and we (won't be) ready for it. So he reluctantly said okay to the concept, but he never once asked me to go take care of this firm or that firm. The selection was mine alone. And a lot of people find this difficult to believe because in other administrations, (politicos) do the selecting of the consultants and tell the (department head or division head), "You must use this firm or you must use this architect." In my case I was able to control it. You know, because my understanding with the governor is that, "You do the job, I'll take care of the politics." (Chuckles) So whatever problems he had he never once grumbled at me for making his job difficult.

One of the first cases was the Maui airport. The previous administration had used a local architect, Ted Vierra, who did, I think, most of the airports for the state. And he had designed a typical interisland-type terminal which he had a lot experience in and, you know, it was okay, except that it was way over budget. And he had come in with a fancy roof that was very costly. It was considered Hawaiian, but was way over the budget. So I scrapped the plan and got a new architect to do it. But the new architect I got was Val [Vladimir] Ossipoff, a very highly respected architect. The only problem with that architect was he didn't support the governor. You know, campaign donations, et cetera. He doesn't support anybody. It's not that he's against the governor, he just doesn't do that. So when I let the people know that I (plan to) hire Val Ossipoff, because I thought he was the best person—I thought, one, he would do a good terminal building for us, but second, that there would be a statement that we're interested in quality. I got a lot of complaints from people who were strong supporters of the governor and (whose) job was to raise money for the governor's campaign. And, of course, they talked to architects who give [campaign contributions] because they want jobs. And they say, "How come you guys, we donated, you giving the job to somebody else?" I understand that what I did made it difficult for them. And I'm sure they complained to the governor. But the governor not once asked me to reconsider. So I went ahead. I told Val, "Val, I will give you this job on one condition; you (must) come within budget."

And he said, "Okay."

I think he lost money on the job.

(Laughter)

FM: Because he had to redesign a couple of times to bring it within budget. But it came out (okay). The terminal was different, you know, it's kind of a Val Ossipoff design. It's open, airy and nice scalloped roof. And functionally it was okay but it wasn't the Ted Vierra interisland terminal that people were used to. So some liked it, some didn't. But the important point of that story was that Jack Burns kept his word. He said, "You do the best job you can," and leave the politics to him.

WN: What kind of mandate did Burns give you when he was trying to entice you to take the job?

FM: One was that; and I didn't fully understand the import of what that meant. Because I'd never been involved in politics so I didn't know how nasty some of that could be. But if I didn't have a strong governor I'd have left long before that. And the second, which I liked, was that he said he wanted me to do a good job, but also to try to help the local profession or local community. Not just the professional but whoever we dealt with, which I could subscribe to fully. But, again, he let me do it in the way that I thought would be best. There were people who were, I'm sure, strong supporters, well-meaning people who supported the governor that I would say no to when they applied for jobs or when I get a call from the governor's staff saying, "This guy's interested in that job."

And I'd tell 'em, "No, he can't handle it," (if I felt that he was not fully qualified).

You know, I'd be doing the governor a disservice by putting somebody unqualified on the job who'd mess it up. So he never once violated his word to me. In fact, once he asked me—there was a job at the small-boat harbor. And he called me and said he had a friend in Kailua that's looking for something and he was interested in the job. "What do you think?"

And I said, "Let me check it out," because it was kind of a low-level job. But I looked at his application. And I called the governor and said, "Governor, this guy doesn't have (the necessary) experience, so I don't think we can use him."

He said, "Oh, okay."

I don't know how many guys tell the governor, "No," for something like that, but at the time I didn't think anything of it.

WN: This is in '63, he had just gotten elected governor.

FM: Yes.

WN: Did you get the impression that he was in charge or he knew which direction—where he was going at that time?

FM: Oh yes.

WN: Did you have the feeling that he was sort of groping around . . .

FM: Oh, okay, in '63 when I first got in? Well, when I first got in I didn't know the governor that well, in fact, I had some misgivings about whether I would like working for him. I thought of it as an opportunity to do something, say, for the state, not so much for the governor. Because

I had no prior relationship with him. Over time, though, I learned to really respect and like the guy. I enjoyed talking to him, later. At the beginning, frankly, I was nervous talking to him because I didn't—you know, I don't know politics, I don't know politicians. I never had any dealings with governors, my goodness. But I learned that he was a really solid guy. Very consistent, very stubborn. He doesn't waffle which is a strength and maybe sometimes a weakness. But I admired his character and his values. But took me a while to discover that, though.

MK: Back in '63, did you feel that he had a vision for Hawai'i?

FM: Yes. His state of the state message and things like that, yes. But what one says is not necessarily what one does, right? I think most political speeches are very (chuckles). . . . But I think Burns was different in the sense that he wasn't a very good speech giver but he did have a very long vision. And some of the things he said, I would say, I came to understand and appreciate as I worked with him. At the beginning I wasn't swept off my feet or anything. It's more because I really didn't understand what was going on. What does a university professor know about these things, you know.

MK: The mandate that he gave to you, one was to try to raise the level of the local professional community or the community at large. And the other mandate was that he would take care of the politics. You go about and do your work. Were those two promises, promises that he made to all his cabinet heads or something that he said to you only?

FM: You know, I don't know. I've never discussed it with the other members although when I got into these situations because I was acting in accordance with that, I would tell people, "My job is to do the best I can. If you don't like what I'm doing go see the governor." (Chuckles) But among the members of the cabinet I don't recall any specific conversations. I would think that he would say the same thing to everyone.

MK: When you mentioned that sometimes the staff people would get back to you, would that be like Mike Tokunaga, Dan [Daniel T.] Aoki. . . .

FM: Yes. And those guys were terrific. It was their job to do that portion of the work which is so difficult, you know, to toe the line, get support for the governor. And the governor's rule was, other things being equal, take care of your friends. But if there are two people applying for a job, person A is better than person B, person B is a supporter, meaning that he made campaign contributions, person A didn't, he says the job should go to person A. Now, that's the governor speaking. At the staff level, I'm not sure how close you can toe that line, right. But for people like Dan Aoki, with whom I had many disagreements but who I really admired for his total dedication to the man, to Jack Burns. He was on board much earlier than I was in terms of supporting the governor. And I think the story was Dan Aoki mortgaged his house to help the governor's campaign. So even though I disagreed with them on some of these things, like who should be hired, I always understood that he was trying to do his job. And in some ways, a more difficult job than mine. So yes, I would get calls from them. And if it's okay I'd say, "Yeah, okay." And if it's not I'd say. . . .

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-22-7-96

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Honolulu, O'ahu

November 6, 1996

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on Wednesday, November 6, 1996, and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto and Warren Nishimoto.

MK: . . . how well, do you think, the airports have been developed for tourism growth?

FM: I think the airport system developed in a very reasonable way both in terms of operational requirements as well as in terms of the financial requirements. The burden of the airport, how to finance it is really on the air travelers and not the taxpayers. So the airline companies and the various concessionaires and lessees of the airports throughout the state pay for the development and operation of the airports. So I think that's a very important point. And another change that we made—because we were behind the eight ball—is that the design and construction of the airports were under the jurisdiction of [the Department of] Accounting and General Services, [DAGS]. Just like they're in charge of school construction, they were in charge of airport construction. And especially on the neighbor islands, we were getting a lot of complaints about the Department of Transportation or the airports division not making improvements or additions in a timely fashion. And we got all the blame.

(Laughter)

FM: We took all the heat. And yet we didn't want to publicly just point fingers and say, "Go talk to them because it's their job." So we finally went to the legislature—I think it was the second or third year [after] I [became] the director—and said that in our case, for the highways construction we did the planning, design, construction and operation, and in the case of the harbors division also, we (did) that. So we had the capability [to take over airports construction]. It's not like, say, the Department of Education [DOE] that has no experience or staff or the infrastructure to handle the planning, design, construction [of schools]. We had the capability so, especially because we were having so much difficulty getting the work done through DAGS, that we had the law changed so that function came to us.

Now, DAGS understandably resisted that. And it was really not their fault in the sense that at the same time we were expanding the airports, it was a period of rapid growth for the state. So there were state office buildings and school construction, university construction, all those things had to be done by DAGS. The airport program was at that time a relatively small

program for them. But we were able to get that changed and then it was clear who was responsible. You know, a divided responsibility never works. So it was good for us and I think good for the public.

And of course, (next) was the actual physical development of (the airports). We faced—I think I mentioned the last time—we had two major imperatives, you might say. One was the Pacific route case when all of a sudden, I think, six or seven new airlines coming in which meant additional capability at Honolulu International [Airport]. And then at that time, I think, some of the airlines also wanted to go to Maui and Hilo. And couple of those were granted, so we had to improve the [airports on the] neighbor islands, too. And that was a really short fuse. So that was one major problem. And, (second), on a longer-term basis, the arrival of the wide-body aircraft which was a whole new generation of airplanes. So those things had to be planned and built but also financed.

So the financing of (the airport system) was a major part of the problem. But considering everything, I think we did fairly well. In fact, I think Honolulu International [Airport] was the first airport throughout the world that was specifically designed to accommodate the 747 in terms of the (terminal and airfield) strength of the runway, [and] the apron area. When you have, say, 150-, 180-passenger airplane[s] you need waiting rooms that are only yea big. But if you take one that's 400–450 [passenger capacity], you can't put all those people in there. And how you load and unload the people and the baggage, the whole system had to be redone. Now, many airports made interim fixes to make it work. But ours was the first one that was designed from the ground up to handle these big airplanes. And the master plan that we developed for Honolulu International [Airport] is still being followed. There are some changes, of course, but the basic approach that we laid out is still being followed.

Kona, Keāhole [Airport] was laid out as a second international airport. There was a lot of pressure from the Hilo side and (chuckles) we had key legislators from Hilo who controlled the purse strings, so, you know, they forced us to look at Hilo. But we said that that's the wrong airport, even though it had the long runway. But for future development, Keāhole should be the second international airport. So we master planned that for dual runways. And now, you know, the airplanes finally, what, thirty years later (chuckles) are beginning to arrive (at Keāhole. And direct overseas flights to and from Hilo have stopped.) But I would say all in all, the system approach that we took worked. Not perfectly, of course, changes had to be made. But the basic idea, basic concept has worked. So looking back, I feel pretty good about it.

MK: Looking at the newspaper articles, I think the media and the community had given you a good grade for the airports.

FM: Well, I don't know. (Chuckles)

MK: I guess I should go into the next area, harbors. I think I read that during your tenure as DOT head, the state acquired the Honolulu waterfront?

FM: Yes.

MK: How did that happen?

FM: At that time we had basically two owners of Honolulu Harbor. One was Dillingham [Land Development Corporation], and the other was [the] state of Hawai'i. And we were competing for business. So Dillingham wanted to raise the wharfage and the other port charges, and the state of Hawai'i, because it's not a for-profit operation, wanted to keep it low. Dillingham said that they're sitting on very valuable commercial land. So if they can't make money out of harbor operations they're going to convert (their property) into commercial operations, you know, nonharbor operations. But the state needed—not necessarily at that time but looking to the future—all the waterfront land. Because if you start building commercial buildings (on harbor land), it would limit the state's economic development because to build a new deep-water harbor someplace else would be very expensive. And we had a plan, as a matter of fact, (to build) a barge harbor at Barber's Point. So it was basically the governor's initiative. He told me to do something about that. So Dillingham made a proposal [for] the state to either buy the Dillingham properties or that they [Dillingham] would buy the state properties.

I remember a hearing at 'Iolani Palace. I think it was a joint hearing, but might have been just one house, in which case probably was the house of representatives. But anyway, Dillingham testifying before the committee, before that whole chamber. He was taking a lot of very critical questions from the legislature saying that, well, every time the state dealt with Dillingham, they [state] ended up on the short end of the stick. (Chuckles) So, "Why should we buy your property and give you economic relief," in other words.

Dillingham's (response was) "Well, okay if (the state doesn't) want to buy us out we'll buy you out." And I thought that was a very gutsy statement. I certainly didn't expect it from him. I thought he would try to persuade them to buy Dillingham out so they can take that money and invest it someplace else where they get a better return. That I could understand. But for him to say that he will buy the state property and run the harbors, of course, that wouldn't work because then (the state will) be at their mercy in terms of the cost of living, et cetera. Because they (would) control the lifeline into Hawai'i.

WN: Now, which Dillingham is this?

FM: Lowell.

WN: Oh, Lowell Dillingham.

FM: Yes. It was (a new) experience to me, you know, still rather young at that time, to deal with Lowell Dillingham, and his principal lawyer (Merrill L. Carlsmith). He was head of one of the big law firms [Carlsmith, Carlsmith, Wichman & Case]. But anyway, I didn't have too much experience at that time in terms of property acquisition. But I (did have) some experience by then with the highway program where we (bought property for rights-of-way). I knew the basic process and how decisions were made, some of the basic laws involved. But the basic idea was that we needed to control the waterfront properties so we could develop it for maritime use, even though at that time we had maybe no specific use for some of those properties. But thinking long term, that we would need to do that. So that's one major activity that was going on.

And at the same time, one of the reasons we weren't quite sure was that at the same time, there was a very significant change going on, you might say, comparable to the arrival of the jumbo jets in the airports, which was the containerization movement. We were going from

basically freighters coming in with all kinds of freight that had to be off-loaded by these big cargo nets, one thing at a time, to containerization. And the whole (harbor) utilization changed. And the whole infrastructure, the use of the space changed. In the past you needed a lot of what we called cargo sheds. You off-load all these things from the holds, and then you have to get these loaders and then move 'em into sheltered areas. And you have to secure them, et cetera. Whereas in containers, they're all locked and you just stack 'em up in the open. So the way you design and build and operate harbors changed completely. And the change was going on at the same time. And we were looking at Sand Island as a major facility. So conceptually, to have half of that waterfront going to other than maritime use was unacceptable.

So those two things had to be taken care of. Again, the problem was financing. As I recall, the price tag was \$40 million. A drop in the bucket in today's dollars, but . . .

WN: Which land are you talking about?

FM: The Dillingham lands . . .

WN: For example, Kewalo Basin?

FM: No, no. Honolulu Harbor only.

WN: Oh, just the Honolulu Harbor?

FM: Yes. And Dillingham owned more of the 'Ewa half of the property [waterfront].

WN: Next to Kapālama . . .

FM: Yes, those areas. And then, you know where Young Brothers, [Ltd.] . . .

WN: Yeah.

FM: . . . is located? All that area, the sugar operation, those were their [Dillingham] lands. We had to finance that out of harbor revenues, but we didn't have enough money to do it that way. So we arranged for a phased acquisition, I think it was in three phases. And as we acquired the property, then we get the revenues. But there were lease lands involved with lease tenants, so it was a rather complex transaction. So I learned a lot in the process.

WN: Did you get a chance to go to other Mainland cities and see how the harbor operations were run in terms of ownership and so forth?

FM: Yes. The harbors division belonged to, you might say, trade associations: the American Association of Port Authorities, International Association of Port Authorities and Pacific Coast Association of Port Authorities. You know, different combinations basically all dealing with the same problems. Our problem was rather unique because most areas, they're big enough. And in most areas the government or semiautonomous port authorities ran those operations. So we were a port authority except that we had a major private competitor. And the access to protected deep water is just Honolulu Harbor. At one point there was some talk that Pearl Harbor would be phased out and then we could have that, but you know, (chuckles). . . .

MK: Hmm.

FM: Nobody really wanted that because we wanted the [U.S.] Navy here. So in terms of container operations, what's on the horizon, things like that, yeah, there was a lot of interaction and we learned from. . . . But the [land] acquisition and consolidation is a somewhat unique experience. So that we sort of "ad hoc-ed" it on our own. In the negotiation of the agreements with Dillingham, I basically used in-house staff, including some acquisition specialists in the attorney general's office, (for the valuation). I had, in the Department of Transportation, a separate office of deputy attorney generals. I think at one point we had maybe a dozen of them. It was a pretty big operation. So with them and what I learned from my other experience in dealing with lessees and acquisitions, (et cetera), we were able to put that deal together.

MK: In addition to that Honolulu Harbor area, did you acquire other parts of the island for the harbors?

FM: We had a deal with Campbell Estate for Barber's Point. That was a [U.S. Army] Corps of Engineers project. On that one, part of the consideration was all the coral that (was dredged), a very valuable resource. And the question was who will get the coral and who'll get the proceeds for the sale of the coral, et cetera.

We also did Honokōhau [Kona] small boat harbor. We had the commercial harbors, and of course, Barber's Point is a commercial harbor and Honolulu and Kahului, Hilo, well, all of the islands had commercial harbors but we also (needed) had those recreational harbors, like Ala Wai [Yacht Harbor]. Kewalo Basin is part recreational and part commercial. Mostly commercial. But we had projects like Honokōhau. That one we had to blast out of solid (lava) rock. Usually, if this is the shoreline, you build breakwaters to provide the protective waters. But in Kona, the (offshore lands) are so steep that to build a breakwater to provide a big enough basin to park the recreational boats would have been very, very expensive. So somebody came up with the idea—wasn't my idea—that it'd be cheaper to just blast the harbor in solid rock. And it worked pretty well. So those were some of the other projects that we did. (Recreational harbors were done) [using state] general funds. But the commercial harbors were out of the harbors' special fund.

MK: And I think I read that you had hoped for the harbors growth as something that would contribute to the development of a transshipment center. What would that have been, a transshipment center?

FM: That was more, really, DPED—Department of Planning and Economic Development [later known as DBEDT—Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism]—idea which we thought might work, especially with containerization. Without containerization the [cargo] handling would be too much, too messy. But with containerization it might work. We were really more interested in a transshipment center for air cargo because we thought that, because of the nature of our travel—we could get a lot of tourist travel but those airplanes have, especially the jumbos, much bigger cargo capacity than just passengers and their luggage. So they can carry quite a bit of freight. Between Tokyo and Hawai'i, let's say, that schedule is determined by the number of passengers, business and tourists. But the cargo may be destined, you know, cargo may be Tokyo to Los Angeles. So we figured that if there were enough cargo destined for Los Angeles but coming from Tokyo, Hong Kong, Sydney, et cetera—where the tourists want to come to Honolulu, this would make a natural consolidation

point and vice versa. So if somebody wants to ship something from Los Angeles to Singapore, they can put it on a plane that comes to Honolulu and then transship it from Honolulu on a plane that goes to Singapore instead of flying a freighter from Los Angeles to Singapore in which case maybe there wouldn't be enough cargo to fill the airplane. So we thought that one made more sense than using ocean freight. And anytime you stop a vessel to off-load or reload, it's a very expensive operation in terms of the time it takes and the port charges and the manpower charges.

You cannot artificially induce people to drop off cargo in Honolulu unless it's cheaper for them to do so. And there are places where that works where they have a (large), what we call, hinterland, where (cargo dropped off) in Los Angeles, (for example), is transshipped many times by truck to smaller communities. Now, that kind of transshipment center wouldn't (work in Hawai'i), but to transship from one ocean freighter to another ocean freighter is a little risky. But anyway, containerization made that more possible than what we called break-bulk cargo, separate cargo. But that idea was never really pushed with any vigor.

MK: Then, I've saved the highway section for last for transportation. That's probably the most complex and most controversial.

FM: It was very controversial because there, you affect the lives and property of citizens (directly). Airports, maybe the surrounding people, but highways reach into everybody's home, virtually. So it was very controversial. It was not complex in the sense that the airport division was complex because you're dealing with large international airlines and you're trying to negotiate fees, et cetera. The highways, the revenues were very simple. You impose a tax and the money comes rolling in. And then also, the interstate system was 90 percent federal money. So once we got our system in place on paper, and our share was determined to be X millions of dollars, we didn't have to worry about the money part. So that was a tremendous advantage in terms of implementing a system if you don't have to worry about the financing. The implementation of the highway, of course, was very difficult. The interstate system was conceptually set when I took over. But the specific alignment and specific projects had to be developed. And we had, I would say two major problems. We had lots of problems but two major ones.

(Laughter)

FM: The original plan called for a *mauka* freeway and a *makai* freeway. The *mauka* freeway, the so-called Lunalilo Freeway, was done originally by the territorial government before we became a state. And it was, you might say, kind of an old-fashioned highway by then. The interstate would have added a *makai* freeway, and that would be up to interstate standards. Coming through the downtown area on the *makai* side basically along the [Honolulu] Harbor posed a major design problem. But it's something that could be handled purely from the engineering point of view. It would be costly but could be done. But there was substantial opposition to the idea by basically the downtown people. And I think certainly in the state, on O'ahu, there was a lot of opposition to that because of—you know, the waterfront is very important to Hawai'i culturally and commercially. So to come in with a viaduct or an elevated structure across the waterfront was considered to be totally unacceptable to many people except the highway engineers (laughs) who said that's the only practical solution there was. And as I say, that concept was already established when I came in. And when I came in, we examined that issue. And I decided that the opponents were correct. I think we were talking

about building a six- to eight-lane highway through (the waterfront, which) would have changed the entire character of the city and would certainly destroy any opportunity to develop the waterfront in the way that (would) make (Honolulu) a nice city. And in that case, the motorists had to take second best. And that's why we have the congestion on H-1 through downtown. It's a real bottleneck.

WN: So originally you're talking about the area that runs next to the airport.

FM: From the airport you swing down Sand Island Access Road, what's basically Nimitz [Highway] now.

WN: Right, okay.

FM: That would have been an elevated highway all the way through (Downtown). And then swinging up around through Ala Moana [Boulevard], Ala Wai Canal, that way. And then . . .

WN: Oh, I see.

FM: . . . and then going. . . .

WN: Oh, so the original plan was to go viaduct all the way over Nimitz, all the way to Ala Moana, Ala Wai.

FM: Yes.

WN: I see.

FM: And then, of course, you have to provide access, you have to get off or get on and so you have not exactly interchanges but you'd have. . . . So it would have knocked out a lot of valuable land. And so I felt that we needed a different solution. As far as a highway solution was concerned I didn't think that there was a highway solution. After we looked at a number of possibilities, we came out with the idea that we were just going to take Lunalilo Freeway and improve it as best we can to handle the traffic. I think even some of the people that were fighting the *makai* freeway were surprised because now I think they realize that we didn't solve the problem of traffic. We solved the city planning problem, maybe, in terms of how the city ought to operate, but the traffic problem in terms of automobiles was either not solved or was deferred. For that very dense corridor—and it's nice and flat—it would make more sense to do a mass transit of some kind. Not necessarily a heavy rail, but some kind of a mass transit. I felt at least there's that possibility. So we came up with the proposal that we incorporate Lunalilo Freeway into our interstate system; improve Lunalilo, upgrade it. And that plan was adopted. So that was a major issue. And the decision has repercussions even to this day. And unless we drop the other shoe (chuckles) the center of the city (will remain) a road block.

The other big problem was, of course, H-3. H-3 was designed to provide access to the Windward side, and very importantly to the [Kāne'ohe] Marine Corps Base [Hawai'i]. The best route was determined to be the one that goes through Moanalua Valley. Moanalua Valley at that time had a residential development, but we found a way to avoid most of (the housing). And then we would go through the valley. We had a number of hearings. There was

opposition from the Moanalua Gardens [Foundation, Inc.] association. The people who owned the land, the trustees of the Damon Estate, basically played a relatively passive role. They didn't actively oppose it nor did they endorse the idea. An heir of the Damon Estate was very active in the opposition. And they made all kinds of claims about that valley being sacred and that it ought to be developed as a park, that they had a plan to develop that as a park. But as far as I know none of that has happened. Right now the conservation land boundaries prevents the subdivision from going any further. But if you look at the road system that goes up Moanalua Valley, you see a fairly wide subdivision road going right up to the conservation boundary. So it's very clear that Damon Estate intended to further develop that valley for residential purposes, if and when they could get the (zoning). Now, that would take a lot of doing in terms of rezoning, et cetera, but the Moanalua subdivision is laid out so that would be possible. And then, of course, there were some artifacts like that famous stone which had been moved about. It wasn't in the original position protected by the estate, you know. It became valuable once we said that we wanted to go in there. And we said, "Well, we'll do whatever (is necessary) to preserve it, make it a monument, a shrine, build a park around it, provide access to the park." We (offered to do) everything that we thought was reasonable because we agreed that those things should not be disturbed. But I thought that we could coexist, and we would do everything possible to enhance what was there.

Well, fortunately for them, or unfortunately for us or for the people of Hawai'i, the NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act was passed in 1969. And that act said anytime there's expenditure of federal funds you (must) have an environmental impact statement [and environmental assessment]. We had finished all of our hearings and we had done archaeological surveys, et cetera, even though they were not required by federal law at that time. We had awarded a drilling contract to start subsurface explorations in preparation to start and complete the design when that [1969] law was passed. And so we said, "Well, it's too late. We're committed already so we're going to move ahead with it." And somebody, I think Moanalua Gardens [Foundation], wrote to our Congressional delegation. We got a letter, a copy of a letter that Patsy Mink wrote to the then secretary of transportation asking him to intervene in this project, stop it and require us to do an EIS [environmental impact statement]. So, of course, we disagreed with that. But we were finally ordered to stop the project and do an EIS. What they basically said was, we haven't looked at enough alternatives which is a requirement of the law, which we had, but—and I think this is correct—that we did not look at the other alternates in as much detail as we did Moanalua. Because you don't have to look at everything in great detail before you decided which one is the best.

WN: Well, what were the alternatives?

FM: Hālawa Valley, Nu'uanu Valley, we looked at (chuckles)—I think in one extreme case we even looked at Mānoa Valley. So we basically looked at several valleys that tied Honolulu to the Windward side. One of the major objectives was to tie, as I said, Kāne'ohe to Pearl Harbor. And Moanalua [Valley] is a very natural corridor. And at that time, of course, there was objection but there's objection no matter which route you pick. There's always objection by people directly affected by that. So, that you expect. And so we felt that Moanalua made the best sense. And if there were things that were culturally important we would do whatever we can and whatever it takes to protect it. But the opposition was saying the whole valley is sacred. Not just important, it's sacred. That's where the Hawaiian race was (created), et cetera. So to condense several years of litigation (laughs) we ended up [building the H-3 through] Hālawa Valley [instead of Moanalua Valley]. The financial consequence of that is (staggering).

WN: Let me turn the tape over.

FM: Okay.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: Well, as I recall, the entire interstate system was going to cost \$750 million, something like that. And the H-3 portion was \$300 million. That was the total (estimated) cost. That includes land acquisition, planning, design, construction. And the formula was 90 [percent] federal, 10 percent state. So, say, state share was \$75 million [for the entire interstate system], for H-3, state's share was \$30 million. Well, what, twenty years later we're finally doing H-3. And I haven't kept up with the latest costs but I thought I read someplace, somewhere in (the neighborhood of \$1.3 billion for H-3. That's over a billion dollars more than the original cost.) You know, the tunnel project and all the very difficult construction, going through Hālawā Valley. It's a longer route, more difficult construction. So even if it were done at the 1960s cost, it would have been more expensive.

We ran into things—difficult to believe, but in one of the earlier plans we had the route aligned in areas we thought would do the least damage. And there was a county park, as I recall, in the vicinity. We didn't actually hit the park because one of the prohibitions—it's not absolute, but—said you cannot take park lands to build highways. So we avoided that. And also that you cannot adversely affect the park. So, say, you can't skirt the park. It would create a lot of noise and dust and (emissions), which makes sense. So we avoided that. And the buffer zone in between was later suggested to be developed into a park and added to the existing park. But when that was done, the opponents who by that time were fighting every single move said that when we did that, we were now affecting a park and therefore we can't use that alignment. And the court sustained that, (even though the highway pre-existed the park addition). So we had to realign. We would have been better off by not trying to (enlarge that park). Maybe after it was built, then if somebody said why don't we convert that [area into a park]. But when you're planning it, you try to plan it so that you get maximum benefit out of it. But in that case it backfired.

So anyway, (problems) like that delayed (H-3). And every one went through a court battle. Eventually it took an act of Congress to provide some exception to Hawai'i in order that we be able to complete the system. So say the cost is—I hesitate to use numbers because I'm not sure—but let's say it was (\$1.3) billion. (Ten) percent of that is (\$130) million, compared to 10 percent of \$300 million (which) is \$30 million. So this highway ended up costing the taxpayers of Hawai'i instead of \$30 million, (\$130) million. So the additional \$100 million of state money—never mind the federal portion—that we had to pay to get that highway could have been used to do all kinds of wonderful things for the environment, or for the parks system or for Moanalua Valley, for that matter. But that's in hindsight.

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

FM: So that was a second major problem that we had. As I said, we had lot of other problems as

well. Oh, there is a third problem not directly related to this. Well, directly related but not our jurisdiction. And that is the mass transit system. Opponents to H-3 came up with the preposterous idea that we should have mass transit across the [Nu'uuanu] Pali. And typically, mass transits carry high density loads, right? If it won't carry the commuter traffic (anticipated for H-3) it's not worth doing. And if you're going to carry commuter traffic, if it's going to relieve the traffic at all between Kailua-Kāne'ohe and the town side, you gotta have high-capacity vehicles making that very difficult crossing. You can tunnel through part of it but you can't tunnel through all of it. So the cost of building it would be very, very expensive, more expensive than a highway by the time you include all the equipment and provide for emergencies, especially through the tunnels, and the steep *pali*. Plus, the annual operating cost. Mass transit systems are not suited for that kind of terrain. And people were saying, "Instead of building a highway, why don't we build a mass transit?" (It was ridiculous.)

We said, "That doesn't make any sense at all," and we went through the numbers.

And at that time, I think it was [Honolulu mayor] Frank Fasi, who said, "Well, instead of doing H-3, why don't we do a mass transit?" And the mass transit (he was) talking about was through Downtown.

But I said, "Well, in that case it's not either-or. We're solving two different problems." See, mass transit had its own funding. And so our position was, let's finish H-3 first because H-3 was designed as part of a three-legged (highway) system (to serve the Windward side). If you have a three-legged stool and you finish only two, the (chuckles) third leg is not there, the system is not going to work. So let's do the third leg, finish that, and then work on the mass transit (which is intended to serve the Leeward corridor). Taking money from (H-3) to do a mass transit (Downtown) certainly didn't make sense. And that was just a harassment tactic, (chuckles) I think. At that time the city and the state were fighting all the time (chuckles), right? And so it's very unfortunate that we did not have a joint plan to do what was best for the county and for the state.

But anyway, we're finally finishing H-3, and the mass transit problem is still unsolved. Mass transit, I think we need it. But I think it's going to have to be a heavily subsidized system, and that if you do it you're going to do it not just to solve traffic problems but to provide for a quality of life that we think would be important to the people of Hawai'i and visitors to Hawai'i. And that's going to cost some money. If it's a highway, then you say, well, let the users pay. That is through your gas tax and other taxes, you pay for all of that. But on the mass transit system, the nature of the beast is such that if you try to make it pay for itself it's not going to work. San Francisco, well, any Mainland city, if you have a mass transit system, it's subsidized. There's no reason to believe that Honolulu can do it without subsidy. So my problem with the city at the time was that they would never discuss the operational subsidy (needed). They only talked about the construction cost. The construction cost is a small part of the cost of a mass transit system (in the long run), because that's a one-time cost, whereas the operational cost is a recurring cost, and it can only go up, because your cost of living, labor costs, et cetera, would keep going up. And every time you replace (components) you have to replace (components) every twenty or thirty years—a car or a computer system or whatever, maybe with the exception of a computer system, everything goes up. So the most important problem from a financial point of view of a mass transit system is, what will be the annual cost? And how are you going to finance that? The initial cost, if there was a large federal

subsidy, and the local matching portion could be financed with a bond and spread out over thirty years, after thirty years it's paid for. But the annual cost is a different matter.

WN: That generally has to come from, say, the state . . .

FM: Yes . . .

WN: . . . to maintain. The state or the counties.

FM: . . . or the county, yes. And to my knowledge, there was never any open discussion on what that (might be), what that number (might be) and how they're going to get that money. Because it was clear that you can't get it through the fare box. There were some representations that the fare box will pay for it. But that's not true in any other place, so why would it be true here? It's not true with the bus system. And they say, "Yes, but this is more efficient." Which is true, but in many cases you still need the bus feeder system. Unless you're going to build large apartment complexes near these train stops, which we don't want either. I mean, there will (naturally) be some, but you (cannot force) people up in the heights and the valleys (to move near the transit stations). If you drive your car (to the stations) that negates the whole (idea). If you take the bus that's an additional cost. So anyway, people were in love with the idea of a mass transit system and wanted it no matter what, without really rationalizing it.

WN: When you came in 1963, well, you were the first under Governor Burns, as DOT director.

FM: Yes.

WN: So when you came on board, what was already in place in terms of the plans for the H-1, H-2, H-3 system?

FM: The master plan was in place.

WN: Already was in place.

FM: Yes.

WN: And were the funds already allocated and ready to go? Federal funds, I mean.

FM: Federal funds, yes, there was a general agreement that there will be X miles of the highway at an estimated cost of, as I say, \$750 million or something like that. But that changed year by year. And the Congress would---there was a five-cent-per-gallon tax imposed nationwide to fund the interstate system. And our portion wasn't being raised locally because we don't (chuckles) have enough cars, right? But monies being generated in [the] other forty-nine states, a portion of that would come to us.

WN: And we'd only been a state for three years when you had taken office.

FM: Something like that.

WN: Four years. So lot of this was---all of this sort of came between '59 and '63 in terms of

funding and the planning, and so forth?

- FM: When we became a state, I think one of the things that we were able to do was to have a provision in the statehood act that we would be eligible for the interstate system because we were paying the tax. And I think one of the things we said was that this would be an interstate/defense highway. Because otherwise we'd have a long bridge from 'Ewa (chuckles) to Los Angeles, right, to make it interstate. (Chuckles)
- WN: So one of the rationales, then, was to connect, link Pearl Harbor [Navy Base] with Kāne'ohe Marine Corps [Base Hawai'i] . . .
- FM: Right, and Schofield [Barracks] at the other [end of] H-2.
- WN: I see, to justify the federal funding.
- FM: Yes, to say that---so the question was, okay, what's the national interest if it doesn't connect to other states? And we said that, well, true we don't do that but there is a national interest. In times of emergency---this is way before my time---in times of emergency you must be able to move (military) vehicles from these three major defense centers to wherever they are needed. So all of the requirements in terms of the height, the loads, et cetera, were designed to take military vehicles. Whichever is controlling it, military or civilian, whichever is the highest. So in the statehood act, as I recall, there was only a provision that we be included. Then there was a requirement that the state prepare and submit a report to what was then the bureau of public roads to get their approval and I think (eventually) Congress' approval. And then two or three years later, that was done. So the basic mileage and alignment were determined and approved. But they were changed from time to time. I think the original system was longer than what it turned out to be partly because of the higher-than-anticipated cost.
- MK: You've been quoted somewhere as saying sometimes it takes ten years, right, to come up with a plan. And then it takes so many years to implement it.
- FM: Yes, well, the whole process is a very lengthy process because we looked at it as not just a highway planning project, you know, a highway planning project won't take that long, okay? But our planning system was tied in to the state (land use plan) and city general plan. The state land use plan determines which areas are conservation, agriculture, urban, et cetera. And the city's general plan further defined the allowable uses (in the urban areas). The city's general plan basically determines future traffic generation. If they say, for example, that future development is going to take place in, say, 'Ewa instead of Kāne'ohe, that will tell us what kind of highways (will be needed), where, what size, et cetera. So we were tied in to the city's general plan. And we had to be sure (our plan was) compatible with theirs. Unlike many places where a state's highway department is autonomous---they just put the highway where they want it to go; that's what resulted in the environmental protection act, [i.e., National Environmental Policy Act] (our highways had to be) integrated into the (city's) general plan. And that was another one of the galling things, because H-3 conformed to the city's general plan. The city's general plan showed H-3 going up Moanalua Valley, up to the conservation land. And on the other side of Moanalua Valley at the other end of the conservation zone, it continued (on to Kāne'ohe). And the only reason that (H-3) was not shown through the conservation [zone] is [that the] city said, "That's state land. We don't zone state land." Makes sense. Opponents said that [that means that] there was not commitment to go through there.

We thought that we had a commitment from the city to go through there, and they reneged on that. If they had stood by our side and said, "No, the city council has adopted the plan. That's where they intended it to go. The only reason it's not shown is because (the city has no zoning authority over conservation land). But the entry and the exit is on both ends of Moanalua Valley (and it was the city's intent that H-3 use the Moanalua corridor). But they refused to take that stand, and of course, there were lot of opposition and they chickened out. So anyway, (chuckles) that's all, what, thirty years and (\$1.3 billion) ago.

MK: We were just talking about highway planning here being part of a master plan and the city's general plan, and how the city had planned for H-3 to go through Moanalua Valley but they kind of chickened out.

FM: Remember, controversy arose. They never stood up and said, that was the plan. So anyway, it takes a long time. And again, because of the way we worked in this state, the city's general plan, once adopted it doesn't mean necessarily that it's (fixed) because on a very detailed project-by-project basis, you have to get approval again. So the project starts on the ground, you might say, once you start acquiring property. Until then it's a plan only on paper. So to go from concept to the point where you start buying property, condemning property, that takes a long time. If you go through farm lands of Nebraska, let's say, (chuckles) may take a few months, you know, negotiate with the farmer or condemn it. The trial itself and the determination of the value may take a long time but you can take possession and start digging right away. Going through any urban area is difficult. I think going through Hawai'i urban area or even Hawai'i rural area, is a very, very lengthy process.

WN: So I would imagine H-2 was not as controversial as H-1 and H-3 primarily of what you were saying?

FM: Yes. We had large landowners and there we could skirt the developed areas. Mililani was the closest, I guess. The old, what, Kam[ehameha] Highway, is it? We stayed away from that. And the idea with H-3 was that we would be able to do that also. The closest we came was the Hālawā interchange, which was at that time—it's hard to recollect that far back, but lot of sugarcane in that area, and Moanalua Valley, the subdivision just starting. But we were up on the hillside, so we didn't take any houses. The plan was not to take any house—we could avoid everything. We thought we had a very reasonable, rational plan. We thought it would minimize the cost and minimize the dislocation or the inconvenience to the population.

WN: Just sort of to bring some of this full circle, I remember growing up here and so forth, reading about a ferry as means for mass transit. And it sort of combines two of your *kuleanas* (chuckles) . . .

FM: Yes.

WN: . . . into one. Did that take up a lot of your time and energies?

FM: Yes, we spent considerable time on the idea of a interisland ferry using highway funds. And we went to look at some ferry systems. You know, the example they gave us was the Washington [state] ferry system which is run by the state highway department. You know, to go from Seattle to, say, Bainbridge Island, for example, across the [Puget] Sound they had these Seattle ferries running. They were operated by the state highway department. And they

called it the marine highway. Makes sense. They carry cars as well as passengers. And the idea was why can't we do that to link the islands. And I think that was conceptually a good idea. The problem was that the Puget Sound is an island sea, it has a fairly large tidal range but the water is very—there are currents but no big waves. But in our case going across the channel to Kaua'i or to Maui and to the Big Island you basically have open-ocean conditions. So you cannot use the kind of ferry boats they use in the Washington system. You can't even use the kind of system that (is used) in the Alaskan (marine) highway which is another system that connects Alaska's various islands. There you have what they call an inland passage. It's basically protected, very smooth except for little bit toward the end you'll (encounter) some open-ocean conditions. There's a ferry that goes to Kodiak island which is exposed, and that's a very rough voyage. I went to Australia to look at the Tasmanian ferry, (which) crosses the Tasman Sea which is a rough operation.

But basically (our effort) failed for financial reasons. It was too costly to build an oceangoing vessel to carry passengers and cars at a low enough rate that the people would use it but at high enough rate that it'll pay for the cost. So in that case we were still talking about a self-supporting system. Now, the rest of the highway fund will support that if we did it that way but it would be considerable for a relatively small number of patrons for that system. Most people if they have business they're going to fly. So that would be more like a vacation use. And in that respect it's sort of marginal use.

WN: Did the big airlines pose a strong lobby against it?

FM: I don't recall, I don't remember that. Maybe they said, well we don't have to worry about that it's not going to fly. John Hulten, Senator Hulten was a strong proponent of (the ferry) and got strong support from the neighbor island legislators because they saw that as a benefit to the neighbor islands, and that's certainly true. And they also saw that most of that would be paid by the O'ahu drivers or taxpayers which would have been true also. But ocean technology at that time did not make it feasible. But the new technology that since has been developed and this new vessel that's being built by the Honolulu Shipyard [Inc.] called the Slice, I think that concept might work. I don't know whether you saw it or not but Dan Inouye announced that UH (will) get a new research vessel built on this new technology. It's very stable. It's used for oceanographic research—they need a stable platform for that. Basically it has submerged pontoons that provide the stability and also the speed. And this Slice vessel is the newest version of that. Something like that might work. It's comfortable and it's fast. I don't know what it (will) cost but if the cost is within reason there might be quite a bit of usage of that (concept).

WN: What about the idea of using the ferry system for mass transit on O'ahu?

FM: Yeah, that was proposed by John Craven and then picked up by E. Alvey Wright [FM's successor]. They thought to bypass all the Kalaniana'ole [Highway] bottleneck into town, you have a pick-up point at Hawai'i Kai and run a vessel into downtown. That had some appeal but when it was tried it didn't succeed. Remember for a short while there was a trial run on that and it didn't work? You know, the car is such a convenient device that serves many purposes. Rapid transit serves basically just the transportation need, whereas cars can be used for so many other things. And basically [with a car] you decide the schedule, where everything else [i.e., ferry or rapid transit], the schedule decides your behavior. So it's going to be difficult to change that [habit]. But like anything else there is a break-even point. At some

point the guy says it's too much of a hassle. You don't want to sit in a car and go through all the hassle of traffic jams and parking costs and inconvenience, et cetera. So if you build a good system that's attractive, convenient and enhances the environment and quality of life, I think people will use it, but it won't pay for itself. As long as anybody says that—requires that the system pay for itself by the users—then it's not going to fly.

MK: When you were about to leave the Department of Transportation, I think it was E. Alvey Wright—you just mentioned him—he was quoted as saying you were a very good planner, very good planner for the DOT. And I was wondering if you could say something about your philosophy of planning for transportation and for the state of Hawai'i.

FM: Well, I don't know that I (chuckles) had a philosophy. I'm not a planner by training but I guess I tend to think of anything in a broad system basis and a longer-term basis. I would say I basically viewed transportation systems as integrated; it's part of your total activity. It's certainly integrated into the economic activity of a region or a city or a state. It's also integrated into the daily lives of the people. So in order to do a good transportation system you have to start with the community. And the community could be small, could be Wahiawā town or could be the whole state, or in our case, especially when you're talking about airports and harbors, you gotta talk international. What is the international community? What is the flow of goods and people? And what role can Hawai'i play? And that role will be determined basically by not Hawai'i but by the rest of the world. Whoever needs to use the transportation services will look for the system that serves his needs the best, whether it's recreation or commercial or freight or whatever, communications. So Hawai'i has to be able to understand what the opportunities are and which activities that you can add value to so, say, if you go to Hawai'i you're going to benefit from it. Nobody will come to Hawai'i just because we want them to come. If Mexico is a better destination for them, that's where they're going to go. They will not transship through Hawai'i if it means it's going to take longer and cost more money. So whatever you do you have to understand, I guess maybe in today's terminology, the demand side. You gotta understand the value that you add to the system and not all of that can be measured financially. I think the quality of the service you provide is important because people may say, "Well, it's cheaper in Mexico but Hawai'i (is more enjoyable)." You know, you get more for your money in that sense even though on an absolute dollar basis, it's cheaper. So I think that you have to take the holistic view. And because I'm not a transportation engineer, you know—did I tell you that one of the courses—one of the reasons I went to Rose Poly was I used to sleep through the highway engineering course [at UH]?

(Laughter)

FM: I think that's the only C I got (in my engineering courses).

(Laughter)

FM: So it's kind of funny that the one course that I really disliked is what I ended up doing, at least for part of my work.

(Laughter)

FM: But I had experts in highway planning and highway design. So I depended upon them for the

technical side. But the broader conceptual things I sort of learned, I guess, on the job. Because I'd never done that before.

MK: You were on that job for a long time, ten . . .

FM: Ten years, yes [1963–73].

MK: Just looking at the listing of newspaper articles of your time at the DOT, it made me wonder—considering all the lawsuits, the controversies, the headaches that it must have given you—why did you stay so long? I'm sure there were other options.

FM: Oh, well, I enjoyed it.

(Laughter)

FM: I guess I like a good argument.

(Laughter)

FM: But basically, I thought it was—well, I guess two reasons; one, I was fully committed to Jack Burns, to help him as long as he thought I was doing a good job. I didn't care so much whether others thought so, legislators and people like that. They're not my boss. (Chuckles) And I think I sort of rubbed them the wrong way sometimes because that's what I thought, so maybe I might have expressed it. But the other part is that in addition to trying to help the governor build the kind of Hawai'i that he had in his view, that I thought my portion of the assignment—because it was a huge job and lot of people were involved and the portion I was involved in was very important for the future of Hawai'i—so the lawsuits, the problems, these public hearings, being hassled in the legislature, that was all part of the job.

MK: What made you so committed to Jack Burns and to his program?

FM: Well, the man. As I said I didn't know him [at first]. When I agreed to go work for him, I had kind of a vague, I'm sure very naive idea that I should do some public service, that the state's been good to my family and to me and so if I could do something that would be useful to the state I'd do that. And two years was not [asking] too much (chuckles). So unlike many of the people who knew Jack Burns and who believed in his philosophy and the man, I had a much vaguer notion of why I'm doing that. But as I worked in the job and got to know the person and I've had many meetings with him, one-on-one meetings, you know, breakfast meetings, played golf with him, long meetings where I felt badly because I knew there were a dozen people waiting outside (while) he and I talked—well, mostly him talking.

(Laughter)

FM: But I got to know the guy and what he was trying to do and so I admired that and I believed in what he was doing. So I was trying to do the best I can. And the job was challenging but not onerous, I mean, I didn't dislike it.

WN: Did you have the feeling that—you said earlier that somehow you had to do the job and it didn't really matter to you what other people thought so much, you know, if you make a

decision. Did you have that feeling that Jack Burns would always be behind you?

FM: Oh yes. (In front, if it became necessary.)

WN: So it probably helped out quite a bit.

FM: Absolutely. I believed him when he said leave politics to him. And I did. Of course, that didn't shield me from the legislators and politicians. They'd come see me directly and criticize me. But I didn't have to modify what I thought was the right thing to do because of those pressures. Typically, when they can't do things—when they can't force me to do things they would go grumble to the governor. But never did the governor call me and say, "I want you to take care of Senator so-and-so." Never once. I knew that I was causing him problems but (chuckles) we had a bargain: I do the best I can, he'll take care of the politics. He was a fantastic man.

WN: End it here?

MK: Shall we end it here?

WN: Okay. Thank you.

FM: All right.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-23-8-96

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Honolulu, O'ahu

November 13, 1996

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on November 13, 1996 and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Michi Kodama-Nishimoto and Warren Nishimoto.

MK: I think last time we were focusing in on the DOT. And today we'll just start with a few questions on the DOT to wrap up that part of your life and then we'll get into the University [of Hawai'i] portion.

FM: Okay.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MK: As we were leaving last week we were talking about the reef runway situation and that controversy . . .

FM: Yes, yes.

MK: . . . and your perspective on that. So I thought just for the record if you could share some of the comments that you had about the reef runway controversy.

FM: I guess I was saying that I was involved in a number of controversies. One of the big ones, of course, was H-3, and then the other one was the reef runway. I guess I was saying that I learned a lot through these controversies. There was also another project called the Waikīkī Beach Restoration Project where the proposal was made (to) import a lot of sand to restore the beach. And there were people who opposed that. But in connection with---basically working with the waterfront, the surfing community brought to the attention of public officials like myself and to the public in general what an important resource our surfing areas, our water sports generally---the ocean and surfing, particularly---was such an important recreational resource to the people of Hawai'i and potentially also for tourism, for our economy. I think most of us, at least myself, thought of surfing in terms of Waikīkī, Ala Moana, Mākaha, you know those places that non-surfers know about. But SOS [Save Our Surf] which was formed by John Kelly, no matter where we went they said, "No, that's a surfing spot." (Chuckles) And frankly, I didn't believe him at the beginning. But he produced a map, very crude one to be sure, but he had marked out these different areas. And they each had a name that the

surfers used and identified. And this was something that I didn't know about. And we had a number of public hearings on it and I guess my skepticism showed. They were very, very vocal about it and very, you might even say, belligerent about it. But I think in the end we agreed with them that these were, one, bona fide surfing spots that the surfers knew about even though the general public may not have known about, and that these were important recreational areas. We had controversies on highways about going through park lands and things like that. And that's a lot easier to see and understand. But surfing spots half a mile out or something, unless you're a surfer you don't know. This was pointed out to us that these are legitimate and important recreational (resources) that we shouldn't do anything to destroy those.

So the reef runway, as it turned out, did affect some surfing spots. And as you know, the idea was to fill in some of the coral beds to make this runway. It was going to be out on the reef, literally, and that's why it's called the reef runway. And in that process we were going to affect some known, existing surfing spots. Well, we finally had to go to court because we felt that even though we agreed with them that there were some surfing spots that will be affected, we thought we could mitigate that. And in some respects, we kind of rationalized. We said actually some of the surfing spots were relatively far out. But by providing the reef runway—and we were going to excavate just outside of the reef runway [site] to get the coral—it will provide safety and access. So there was some trade off. And there was an overriding public need, you know, public safety requirements for airplanes and passengers, that that was more important. If we could have avoided it, we would have, but we couldn't. And I think we did as much as we can. But it was, I felt, a very important lesson, for me certainly, that when the people speak you gotta listen.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

FM: Okay.

MK: I think last time when we were discussing that you mentioned that SOS had John Kelly as the leader and although you did come to agreement on some point, you still had some disagreements about style . . .

FM: Oh, yes. Incidentally, we did end up in court, you know. (Chuckles) I don't remember how it was settled. [On December 22, 1972, Federal Judge Samuel P. King rejected pleas by environmental groups and ruled that the environmental impact statement on the proposed \$40 million reef runway at Honolulu International Airport was adequate and that construction could begin.] It did go to court and was settled. The problem I had with Save Our Surf was not the surfers themselves or the points that they were trying to make, which as I said I (came to agree) with. But I had considerable difficulty with the way the leadership, John Kelly, was mobilizing these young people, basically, to fight against this project. Now, I can see why they would want to do that, but what bothered me was the approach that was being used. And that was instead of getting these young people to state their case and to try to convince us initially through administrative-type hearings, through the courts if necessary, but basically on the basis of merit, on the (facts). I think there was clearly a conflict here between a general public interest in terms of, say, the airport, the traveling public, the importance of that to the state of the economy, safety of passengers, et cetera, on the one hand, and the recreational resource being enjoyed by the (surfers). And these are legitimate contending interests. And in a democracy you solve these problems through discourse, through arguments, if necessary,

through the courts. And the problem that I was having with the approach taken by John Kelly was that he was painting those of us who were on one side as evil people rather than (just) saying (we) were (wrong). But there (was a) conflict here on how to resolve (issues), how to find a mutually satisfactory solution. So what I thought was happening in that organization was that lot of young people were being turned against the rest of the public, in effect, to preserve their self-interest. But in a way that basically said, "If you don't agree with us, you're an evil person." And that bothered me a lot. As it turned out, you might say we won the fight in the sense that the reef runway was finally approved and built after some delay. And I guess you might say the same thing about H-3, [involving] Life of the Land, et cetera. And there again the same sort of techniques were being used.

One of the persons I remember in my early Life of the Land encounter days was JoAnn Yukimura. She was a bright, young, sincere high school student, I think, at that time. I know her mother, she was my classmate, so that's partly why I remembered her. But knowing her mother and her father and the kind of home she came from, I knew that she was a very decent person. And she was. She behaved in a very, to me, an ideal way. She obviously was very young and idealistic, but if she were my own child I'd be very proud of her. But anyway, she was one person that I think wasn't swayed by the kind of tactics being used by Tony Hodges. The other person I remember is Sophie Ann Aoki, you know Mits [Mitsuo] Aoki's daughter. And she, too, was very tough, but she was never abusive. And even if you disagreed with her you have to admire a person like that. So it wasn't all negative, there were some very good people and I think they proved their worth by going through that phase and continued to believe in what they did, basically at that time, and then exercising really very mature leadership to continue to work toward their ideals. So I'm glad that some of that poison didn't . . .

(Laughter)

FM: . . . well, what I considered poisoning of the people's minds—not as to the substance of the matter but, in our society, how you deal with adversaries. They're not necessarily the enemy, they're not evil people which they try to make all public officials to be. So anyway, that's the story.

WN: I was wondering how you feel about—you know, you mentioned Mits Aoki's daughter and you knew JoAnn's mother. Hawai'i is a small place and here you are on one side of the table and people that you know, especially the next generation of people, [are on the other side]. How did you feel about that? Did that affect you at all, did it make it harder for you to make decisions?

FM: No. I basically—I tried to listen so if they said something that I thought had merit, I would certainly take that into account. If I disagreed, of course, I would tell them I disagreed and why. But I didn't treat JoAnn differently from any of the other young people in the room. So I tried to be impartial. In fact, Mits was, of course, at the University [of Hawai'i], a professor [of religion] and also he was a visiting pastor at Church of the Crossroads where we were members. So on many occasions we had a chance to talk but we never really talked about his daughter giving me a hard time.

(Laughter)

FM: Well, it comes right down to I enjoy encounters with bright young people that are idealistic. In fact, I'd have been disappointed if they were—if they acted like forty-year-old pragmatists.

(Laughter)

FM: Because that would be—I guess we all turn conservative over time but that's because we learn our lesson that in the real world, things don't work out exactly the way you want it to and you gotta accept reality. And so maybe that's one definition of pragmatism. But at their age, I thought really, that's the future of America. Young people, young ideals and fighting for what they believe was the right thing to do.

MK: At that time, your children were about similar in age to . . .

FM: Little younger, I think.

MK: How did your children react to some of the issues you were involved in?

FM: I think they had some difficulty in school among their peers. Because, of course, they [i.e., school peers] knew that—who their [i.e. FM's children] father was. And you read about your father in the newspaper. The [*Honolulu*] *Advertiser* especially had an environmental writer who was supposed to be a reporter but who really was an advocate of environmental causes, and therefore was always attacking what we did, which I resented because on the editorial page, that was fine. On the front page that's not playing by the rules. So anyway, because so much of what we did ended up on the front pages, naturally in school they talk about it. I think the problem in many schools at that level, high school and below, they tend to—and I guess they have to—simplify the issues and make it black and white. And also, many of the teachers really don't fully understand what's going on. So instead of having very thoughtful and serious discussion of public issues, they tend to look for the bad person in the picture (chuckles), (someone to blame). They try to explain who's fault is it that we're in this mess, rather than saying, what is the issue, what are the alternatives. And in many cases, there is no single right answer. There is a whole range of answers and depending on where you sit and your perspective, the right answer for you may [be] different for a person, say, that lives on the other side of the mountain. So anyway, I think to answer your question, my kids were exposed to some of that and in some cases, maybe in many cases where [people] didn't know that they were my children. I imagine they felt very awkward or angry or whatever. So yes, I'm sure it had an effect on them.

MK: At home, say, did you and [son] Bailey ever discuss the H-3 or the reef runway?

FM: Well, let's see, when I was doing some of that he was still not even in his teens, but toward the end, yeah, he was in the high school era, so. . . . We talked about some of the issues but not too much, as I recall, partly because I was hardly home. You know, I had long hours, I had frequent trips, so of course, when he asked questions we would talk about—well, not just him but the others too. But I didn't try to explain to him what was going on, and maybe I should have. But in those days, many nights I didn't have supper at home because I had dinner meetings or late meetings, et cetera. So I think he (will) learn about H-3 from this article.

(Laughter)

- MK: And you had just mentioned the [*Honolulu*] *Advertiser* reporter who was maybe more of an environmental advocate than an objective reporter. How were your relations with the media as DOT head? You were out there having to respond.
- FM: Well, I try to respond factually and rationally to the questions. I guess it's more frustration than anything else. Maybe some anger but being angry at somebody who's trying to do his job as he saw it isn't going to do anything. But I tried to provide factual information. And occasionally I would write a letter to the editor, but my intent was always not to argue with the editor or with the reporter but I was really trying to reach the general public, for the few that read letters to the editor, (chuckles) to try to set the record straight. But I thought the advocacy reporting was really a perversion of the freedom of the press. I think advocacy is fine on the editorial page, they can advocate anything they want to. But the reporter, the public expects that the reporter is reporting, not trying to create news. When you do advocacy writing you're trying to create news, you're trying to create controversy. And so I thought that was really unethical, unprofessional, et cetera. But it was an era when newspapers sold because of these kinds of articles. And so I say newspapers are just a business, right? (Chuckles) I mean, they put themselves on a very high pedestal. And I think there are some reporters that really command the respect of the people because they try to report what's happening in this world and we benefit from that. But when they start to write their personal prejudice and report it as news then I think they ought to be fired. But I think in that case, the editor of the newspaper or the publisher, that was a conscious effort to (propagandize and) sell newspapers. May be cynical but that's the way I looked at it.
- MK: I think during those times, too, I guess it was seen as politically correct to be environmental or politically correct or popular to be against H-3, be against the reef runway.
- FM: Yes, well . . .
- MK: The tenor of the times.
- FM: Yes, but that's why the newspapers, we give them special protection under the Constitution and special privileges. Because if you (only) do what's politically correct, that's very dangerous. (Chuckles) So the newspapers are the ones that should say, "Hey, wait a minute. Everybody's rah, rah, rahing about these things but here are the facts." And at the minimum print both sides of the picture. But in an advocacy-type reporting you print one side of the picture and suppress the other side. And that's what I mean it's being unethical or unprofessional.
- WN: Did you feel that the media actually helped you or affected some of your decisions?
- FM: No. Because I felt, I believed in—I still do—that we do what we think is (right). And if we're wrong, the courts will tell us we're wrong. Take us to court. And that's why H-3 went through the courts (chuckles) and the reef runway went to court mostly on environmental issues. The attack was made based on the environmental impact statement being inadequate. And so some of that, maybe most of that, in fact, can be determined in a very factual manner. But there are some that are issues of values. And so anyway, in our system if there is a dispute, I think if you can solve it without going to court by people coming to an agreement, that's fine. That's to be preferred. But many of these disputes arise because of conflict (brought by a) single-issue constituency. And I like to think of what we were doing as general public interest so

we're looking at the interest of constituents that are not even in the dispute. So if we ignore their interest and only concentrate on that single issue, maybe in many cases we will agree with the opponents. But if we're trying to protect the interest of the general public then it's very difficult to come to (a total) agreement with a single-issue person.

MK: You had mentioned to us earlier that Governor Burns kind of said, "I'll take care of the politics, you go ahead and do your work."

FM: Mm hmm.

MK: In terms of your relations with the media, when the media started kind of becoming negative, did Burns in any way help out?

FM: No. Well, he helped out in the sense of whenever—of course, I didn't work in a vacuum. I would talk with him constantly so he would know what I am doing and I would know what he's thinking. And the good thing about Jack Burns was that I didn't have to discuss on a project-by-project, detail-by-detail [basis]. I knew what his general principles were and I used those general principles. So when we talked on some relatively important issues, just a few words, he would grunt.

(Laughter)

FM: And unless he told me different I took that to mean, "Yes."

(Laughter)

WN: Really? Did he really grunt?

FM: Yes. Or sometimes he'd snort. (Chuckles) He was quite a guy. (WN laughs.) So if there were any—you know the reporters who ask about H-3 or whatever, he never undermined me by trying to win points by saying what's politically correct. So he made it easy for me. 'Cause I didn't have to (worry), "I wonder what the governor's going to say," you know.

MK: I have a question about your relations with the legislature while you were DOT head because you had to go to them, present your budget, defend your budget. How were your relations with legislators? It's hard to assess, (laughs) you know. . . .

FM: I guess mixed. When I [first] went into the department I really didn't know anybody in the legislature because, as I said, I was totally apolitical. But, of course, I had to work with the legislature as you say, and also got a lot of calls from legislators who wanted a pothole fixed or somebody wanted the small boat harbor taken care of and all that. And of course those, I didn't make too many friends (chuckles) along those lines. But I would say that I became good friends with a number of legislators that I could discuss issues with and where I felt that we could communicate. But if the person was very politically motivated, typically I had a problem with those kinds of people because we couldn't communi—well, I guess we could communicate but we couldn't resolve any issues because I refused to behave in a purely political way. So I got into a number of difficulties with individual legislators. But I felt that, well, that goes with the territory. At the beginning I didn't know legislators and what sort of people they were. But as I learned about them and worked with them, I knew who I could

work with and others that I could not. I always tried to be civil because maybe as an individual I didn't care for certain legislators very much but they did represent the citizens and maybe misguided citizens . . .

(Laughter)

- FM: . . . I don't know. But anyway, they elect their representatives and they're trying to get things done through them. I listened to the issues and I listened to what they want (to see if) we can accommodate them in a way that I think meets the broad general, say, public interest. But when they try to personalize it in a way that maybe they want to take care of a campaign worker or something like that, then I draw the line and say, you know, I won't do that. I won't mention any names, but I've had some difficulties with people who couldn't get me to do things that maybe others, they could kind of bully into doing.
- MK: Things that through your years as DOT head you learned a lot. (Chuckles) You learned that when people spoke you kind of listened to the public. You learned to deal with the legislature, you learned to deal with the media. You were put in a position where you had to deal with all these things.
- FM: As I say it was on-the-job training.
- MK: So on this on-the-job training what do you think was the most important thing that you learned from this experience that you took into the university experience later on?
- FM: I guess there are a number of things. In technical terms, for one thing, I learned how the state government operates. I learned government financing, I learned about how to finance airports and harbors, I learned about land tenure, land acquisition, leases. Going to New York, bond markets and working with consulting engineers and financial institutions to borrow hundreds of millions of dollars, things that I never even dreamed of, I had to do. (I learned how the legislature works and I learned, sometimes painfully, how the legal system works.) So in that sense I learned an awful lot. I think probably the most important (lesson) I learned, though, is about people. Because having come through a rather protected environment as a student and then graduate student and as an instructor, researcher-instructor, you deal with a very narrow spectrum of life. And when you get into a job like transportation which affects everybody at all levels, you deal with the widest spectrum of humanity which was really a revelation to me. And that there are good people, nasty people, smart people, not-so-smart people, so I would say the biggest lesson for me, the thing that I learned most about was people.
- WN: Would you say that this experience was a prerequisite to be [University of Hawai'i] president eventually?
- FM: I don't know. You know, I think some of that is useful but many times when a university goes out to look for a president they're looking for a scholar. Somebody who excelled in his own field of scholarship. Management is not important and anyway, the whole university environment is supposed to be a self-governing enterprise with professors basically exercising their own scholarship and fulfilling the mission of the university, which is to discover or create new knowledge (and to disseminate that knowledge). You can't really manage that. It has to be on an individual level. And then, of course, the teaching part, that takes some organization. And research, well, research is the first part. And then extending that into the community, that

takes a little more organization. So it covers a whole range. But the most important part is the scholarship, I think. That's what universities exist for.

But anyway, to answer your question, the kind of experience I had I guess would be useful but wouldn't be a prerequisite because there have been many presidents that came through the normal academic path that made great presidents. I think when a university, especially a public university, has problems dealing with finances, public policy—because, you know, public universities have to be worried about those things, and program priorities, things like that—perhaps the kind of experience I had would be useful. The stereotypical university president, if you think about it really, is the president of a small private college with a rich endowment so you don't have to worry about those things. (Chuckles) Now, those colleges don't exist anymore. And if you're private, most of the time you're either very big or you have a good endowment. But in the public university arena where the average life of a university president is, maybe, five years, there are a lot of pressures. You deal directly with the public, you deal with legislative policy makers, et cetera. So you certainly are not in an ivory tower. And sometimes public universities make the mistake of thinking—having that stereotype of a scholar in an ivory tower coming to run a university and that he would be able to do it. I think that works in times of plenty where in fact just the academic values are the only things that count. But when you have to make difficult decisions like what programs to reduce or cut, how to allocate your funds because they're very limited, and then have to account for them to the legislature and to the public, that takes, perhaps, a different kind of skill. And maybe as it turned out I had all those problems. And maybe in that respect it was good, but say, in Tom [Thomas H.] Hamilton's time when the legislature and the governor basically were fully supportive and (generous), I think that Tom Hamilton was certainly the right president.

WN: I think when we get into the university presidency we'll probably ask you to compare your DOT experience with the presidency and maybe that would be a better time for you . . .

FM: Oh, okay.

WN: . . . to assess whether or not DOT was a true prerequisite for . . .

(Laughter)

WN: . . . your term as UH president. It seems like it was by how you described some of the conflict and pressures that you faced with the DOT. But I was just wondering, did you have anymore questions about the DOT?

MK: Oh, just one more question. When you were DOT head you had all these environmental issues, you had H-3, the reef runway. I don't know if this is a good question, but if you were DOT head now as opposed to then, what differences would there be?

FM: Well, I guess at that time—just looking at my overall responsibility—we were trying to, basically in the airports area, establish this systemwide airport so that not only the citizens of this state but the visitors could get to where they want to go in a reasonable fashion. So we were not only trying to build individual airports but we were trying to develop that system, and also develop the financing system; how do you pay for these things as you build it? You know, who pays for it and how do you allocate those costs, et cetera. Today, I think that

principle is firmly established. And now it becomes more an individual airport [issue] because the system has been established and when we think of, say, making Keāhole an international airport, which incidentally it was master planned to be, it's a matter of implementing that idea. So I think relatively speaking it's a simpler assignment. In the harbors we were also looking at a transition to containerization not just at Honolulu, but at that time it was primarily Honolulu and everything else was going by barge, or ships would call at Hilo or places like that and drop off cargo in small boats. But we knew that the containerization has to go to all ports, so to develop that system idea. And I guess, as we discussed, the biggest problem was Honolulu Harbor. How (do) you deal with these two ownerships? So I think, again, that area is in pretty good shape. The one area that still hasn't been solved is land traffic. And, of course, as we discussed before, the interstate system is an incomplete system. If you look at the overall design I can't say that we solved, systemwise, the highway problem in the same way I could say the airports and harbors.

WN: Excuse me, I'm going to have to turn the tape now.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: As I discussed the last time, the missing link through the Honolulu city corridor was going to be the mass transit. But that effort was abandoned several years ago. So now we're sort of up in the air. So if I were in the job today I think that would be my biggest concern: how do we solve the problem? It doesn't mean necessarily that we build a mass transit or more highways. But, you know, you gotta do something. This island is, in terms of land transportation, unbalanced. So that'd be a very interesting job. (WN laughs.)

MK: That's [current DOT director] Kazu Hayashida's problem now. (Chuckles)

FM: Yes, well, the way the city and county and the state have divided the responsibilities, it's sort of perceived as a city problem. But to me, from the citizen's point of view, it doesn't matter whose jurisdiction it is, they want it solved. So in that sense it's not just a technical problem of how you solve this but also a political problem of trying to get the city and the state to work together. That's a good thirty-year problem.

(Laughter)

WN: Are the issues more complicated today than when you were [transportation] head in terms of more citizen involvement? You know, whenever the city or state wants to build a cemetery in 'Āina Haina [for example] you have public hearings and opposition. There's a not-in-my-backyard syndrome . . .

FM: Yeah, well . . .

WN: . . . are things like that, is that more complicated?

FM: No, I don't think so. We have the same basic issues. Say, typically in a highway, because that

probably impacts the citizens on a day-to-day basis more than any other activity. If we were laying out a highway like H-2 out through the pineapple fields, no problem. But H-1 and H-3 in many places you have to take people's property, chase 'em out of their homes to do the job. So we had many, many of that kind of issues, "Not in my backyard." I think the complication in terms of getting large public works projects done became more difficult by, I'd say, several orders of magnitude when the National Environmental Protection Act was passed in 1969. That virtually put everything—not just in Hawai'i but throughout the country—lot of projects came to a screeching halt. And then they had to go back and (examine) all the environmental (issues). Everything now has to have an environmental impact statement or assessment or what they call a negative impact statement. And any one of these present many new opportunities for public input and very often in an adversarial way. So, yes, it's more difficult but that difficulty started back in 1969. (In some ways it is easier because we have thirty years of experience and precedents in dealing with these issues.)

WN: Okay let's take a short break.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: Okay, in 1973 after ten years in the Department of Transportation you were named to become the vice president for business affairs at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Could you talk about the circumstances which led to that appointment?

FM: Well, I guess the way it happened, as I recall, Stuart Ho who was I think the chairman of the board [of regents] at that time asked me if I would consider coming back to the university. I guess the university was having some internal administrative problems and perhaps some problems with the legislature and the governor. That was '61. Not '61, '71. When did I move to the university, '74?

WN: [Nineteen] seventy-three.

FM: [Nineteen] seventy-three. Before I actually moved I was asked once. And then at that time, as I recall, that was about the end of the governor's second term. And I was very interested in the sense that I always assumed that I was going back to the university. Even though my original plan, as I said, was to get back in two and then three [years], I had sort of gotten into the habit of saying that someday I'd like to go back to the university because that was such a good experience for me. But at that particular time I wasn't quite ready to go because the governor, of course was running for a third term. So anyway, I declined.

WN: So this is back in '71 for the vice president for planning.

FM: Or something like that, I forget what. . . . I don't recall us talking about any specific position except as a vice president basically to help Harlan [Cleveland, then UH president]. And then two more years after that, so, say, ten years on the job [as DOT director], I thought that maybe it was time for a change. The reason is that we were getting into all kinds of disputes, court cases, I had to go appear in court, et cetera, which was becoming sort of routine for me. The first time I went to court I was, you know, concerned whether or not I knew enough about the case, et cetera. But toward the end I was getting, I thought, a little blasé about these problems. So I was thinking that after having been in the job for ten years and having had this terrific learning experience—while it's true that you learn something new from everything, but—the

learning curve was kind of flattening out. So I said, "Well, maybe it's time that I move on," both for my own sake, because I'm not gaining any, really, new experience, but also for the sake of the department. Because so many of the problems were now becoming familiar problems, that I knew what to do, that maybe I was in a rut. If somebody else were in the job they would come up with a different, innovative solution. So I guess maybe the job was getting too easy in a sense.

So when the university asked me again would I come back, I considered (that offer) seriously. And I think at that time, [William W.] Parsons was leaving, and they asked me if I would come in to take his job. So after some consideration about whether I should go then or wait two years—because I didn't think the governor would serve more than three terms—I thought that well, maybe now would be the right time. As it turned out—I didn't know it at that time and I don't think the governor knew it at that time either, but—this was before he became ill with cancer. So I thought that the department was in pretty good shape. There was the outstanding H-3 litigation but everything else was going along okay, so I could leave. And I had three very good deputies and that [E.] Alvey Wright could run the organization. So I left. When I found out later that Governor Burns had become ill, I felt very badly because had I known, I would have stayed. Not that I would have done anything more for his administration but at least not add to his worries, having a new person. You know, he and I had a very comfortable working relationship for ten years. And to burden him for the last two years working with somebody he didn't know as well, I thought was something I would have avoided had I known. So that's one regret that I had. But at the time I made the decision, of course, I didn't know that that was going to happen, so.

WN: What kind of advice did Governor Burns give you?

FM: Well, the first time I told him that I had this offer [in 1971], he said that I shouldn't take it. He said, (laughs) what he said was, "Don't go unless they offer you the presidency."

(Laughter)

FM: So I said, "You're joking. I was just a department chairman. What are you talking about?"

(Laughter)

FM: But the second time I guess he felt that I was really wanting to go. The first time I hadn't made up my mind that I wanted to go. So I just said, "I had this inquiry, what do you think?" But anyway, the second time he didn't try to dissuade me.

MK: What did he say the second time?

FM: You know, I don't remember that. Was something like, "You sure you want to do that?" or something like that.

WN: So there wasn't any protocol within the state government where people would go to Burns first to say, "You think I could talk to Fudge Matsuda . . ."

FM: They might have done that but I wasn't aware of it. The first time they came to me I was surprised because I had no forewarning. But you would have guessed that Stu would go see

the governor and say, "Do you mind if we go talk to Matsuda?" (However), I don't have any information on that.

- MK:** Also in your telling us of how it happened it's obvious that you had a real strong relationship with Governor Burns. Was it like a sense of obligation to stay with Governor Burns, or how would you characterize that relationship that kept you there and being so considerate towards the governor before making a move?
- FM:** Well, the governor didn't know me, right, and he picked me out of the university and gave me this tremendous job and opportunity which I didn't fully appreciate, realize when it happened. But because of his faith in me I was given this tremendous learning experience and an opportunity to be of service to this state. So when I went in I looked at it as just a short-term thing, that I was thinking more selfishly rather than trying to help Governor Burns. So I said, "Well, okay, I'll do my bit." It's like enlisting for two years and get it out of the way. Frankly that's the way I had viewed it. But because I worked with him and realized what he was doing for the state and for the people and how great a man he was, I felt that as long as he wanted me and as long as I could be useful, I would continue. I guess he wanted me to stay but I thought maybe my usefulness was sort of at a peak and maybe from there on it was going to be downhill. It was giving more or less the same answer to the same question when in fact, maybe different answers might be in order. So, yeah, I felt certainly a great deal of obligation to him. Had he asked me, which he didn't, but had he said, "Won't you stay for two more years?" I would have said yes. But I really felt that as far as running the Department of Transportation is concerned I had installed a team that would really be quite competent to do the job.
- WN:** What were other considerations to take the UH job? I know you were working long hours at the DOT. Was that a consideration?
- FM:** Somewhat in the sense that—again, I wasn't right, but I think certainly being the head of the Department of Transportation and vice president for business [affairs] at the University [of Hawai'i], the visibility factor is quite different. One is totally internal and no matter what you do the head person draws the fire. So there was certainly that benefit, you might say. I expected that I would spend long hours because I understood that the university was having a lot of problems, many of them financial, administrative sort of problems which would fall in my area. So I expected long hours but I also expected a lot less visibility which would be very welcome. And, of course, probably the main reason is that in spite of the fact that I'd been in public service for ten years, I'd always, I guess, thought of myself as basically a university person. So it was like going home, right?
- WN:** Did you know Harlan Cleveland before?
- FM:** No.
- WN:** Not at all?
- FM:** I guess I had met him on a number of official or social occasions but I didn't know him, really, as a person or as a university president. Of course, I got to know him during the one year that I was his vice president and I got to like him very much. I think it was a difficult assignment for him. But he's a very bright person. He talks like I wish I could write.

(Chuckles) Takes me several drafts to get it to that stage, where he can just talk like that. Obviously tremendous experience in terms of his NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] experience and generally his diplomatic work and, of course, at [The] Maxwell School [of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University]. So I had a great deal of admiration for the guy. And I enjoyed talking to him because he was such a great (thinker). But I also had a lot of sympathy for him because he was obviously getting such a hard time at the university from the board of regents, from some of the faculty members, from the governor and the legislature. So I was trying to do the best I could to help him. It was too bad because I thought he was a good man. Just that it wasn't a good fit. Maybe at another university he would have made a terrific president. And it wasn't anyone's fault, it wasn't his fault, it wasn't the regents' fault, it's just that when you have an incompatible situation really you can't say it's one party's fault or the other's.

WN: Prior to taking the job were you aware of these problems, of not only the budget problems but also the incompatibility of the president with the board and the university?

FM: Yes, well, I was made aware of the problem when they first came to ask me if I would come back, and that was on the basis that the university and Harlan needed help.

MK: So in essence were you brought back as, like, the troubleshooter?

FM: Uh, yes, maybe that's not the right word, because Harlan's problem was with the—it was a question of style. His dealings with the board of regents members, his dealings with the legislature and also with the governor. I guess they thought that it's an area that I could be useful for the university. I think the primary interest was not so much to help Harlan but to help the university. I don't know what Harlan told you but he, in the short time that I was there with him, some of the board of regents meetings that I sat through with him, they really gave him a bad time.

WN: I know that you were nominated around early part of '73, and later on that year, '73, Harlan submitted his resignation effective '74. Was there any inkling at all as you took the VP job as maybe that you would be taking it be the heir apparent, to be president?

FM: There certainly was no indication in the sense that they invited me to come, "Cause we want you to take over." There was none of that. But I think there were a lot of rumors going around that that's why I was being brought in. But as far as I was concerned I was being brought in as a vice president. That I would do my best to help the university and that meant that you had to have a successful president. You can't have a president that's failing and have a successful (chuckles) university. But I think some people may have thought that Jack Burns engineered the whole thing. But I guess they don't know that Jack Burns told me, "Don't do it." At least the first time.

WN: In looking at some press clippings, Cleveland was quoted as saying that you were the obvious candidate and the only candidate considered. Were you aware of that? Were there other—you know of any other names that were . . .

FM: Yes, there were several good candidates in my mind. The one I remember is Dick [Richard H.] Kosaki, you know, my good friend and my classmate who'd spent his life at the university, who knew the university better than I did. He was universally liked, he had some strong

support on the board, so. . . .

WN: So you're talking about, though, the eventual presidents.

FM: Yes.

WN: Not so much. . . .

FM: Oh, you're. . . .

WN: . . . the vice president. . . .

FM: . . . talking about vice president, oh. Vice president, no I suppose I'd be—if I were Harlan Cleveland I'd be looking for somebody (chuckles) like me who knows the state government, who knows the legislature, is on good terms with the governor and so if I'm having problems with the governor I'd want somebody like that. But I'm sure there are others who are. . . .

MK: I think Harlan Cleveland was quoted as saying that Dr. Matsuda would be the obvious candidate and the only candidate considered for the. . . .

FM: Oh yes, now I recall. . . .

MK: . . . vice presidency because. . . .

FM: On the stuff that you left for me to read, the news clipping, I think he was quoted in there because they sort of—what did he say—he truncated the search process.

WN: Something like that, yeah.

FM: Or something that because there was only one candidate (chuckles) or something like that, yeah. You know, until I read that—I guess I remembered that when I read it, but that there was some controversy about my appointment. I think there were many others who fit the bill in terms of knowing the legislature and, say, having the trust of the governor. But for someone who had that as well as who knew the university—although in my case not as well as some of them, maybe, people like Dick Kosaki—I think that combination would be a little difficult to find. So in that respect I would (perhaps) be one of the logical choices. Maybe not the only choice but one of the logical ones.

WN: I think what happened also was that vice president for business affairs was not necessarily the number two person in the administration.

FM: No.

WN: It's usually the vice president for academic affairs.

FM: Oh yes, academic affairs is very clearly the number two. And in Stu [Stuart M.] Brown they had an excellent person. So if there were to be—say, if Harlan were to leave, Stu Brown would be the logical person from within the university to succeed Harlan.

WN: And yet, Stu Brown left.

FM: Stu Brown---my understanding, I overlapped with Stu Brown for just a short period but in that short period I got to know him and like him. He was a very, very good person. To me he was a gentleman scholar. And I was sorry to see him go but he came from Cornell [University] and his wife just couldn't adjust to Hawai'i as I understood it, as I heard from others at the university, and she wanted to go back to Cornell. So had he stayed I think he would have been the logical person to succeed Harlan Cleveland. Because my recollection, impression, also is that unlike Harlan, he was on good terms with the regents.

WN: So upon taking office as vice president, what were some of the problems? You did mentioned that there were---university was having some problems.

FM: Well . . .

WN: Was it internal problems or . . .

FM: It's more administrative, financial sort of problems on one hand and board relations, how to work with the board [and how to] get the board to approve things that, say, Harlan wanted approved. [And] work with the legislature also. It's basically internal management. The big issues in universities always are---well, not always---but generally are academic issues. Administrative issues are secondary, they're only important to the extent that they impede the academic process or programs. We want the administrative things to be supportive, helpful, providing resources, the environment, et cetera. But the important activity is, of course, the academics. So in a university setting, the job that I had was important but not the main show, you might say, which is fine.

WN: I guess the title today would be vice president for administration?

FM: Yes, I think so.

WN: Did you have any goals for the university upon taking office?

FM: No. My goal was basically to resolve the issues that Harlan and the university had. Because, you know, we can say Harlan had problems with the legislature but that meant that the university had problems with the legislature. And same thing with the governor. So I saw my job as helping Harlan and the university to resolve those issues so we can get favorable decisions out of the governor and the legislature on the merit of our ideas and proposals rather than because of personalities. I was told---and I don't know how true it is---that toward the end of Harlan's tenure he couldn't even get in to see the governor. I'm sure that's not totally true but at least it was difficult for him to get appointments, where I could call [Burns' secretary] Mary Isa and walk through the back door practically any time.

MK: What would you attribute Dr. Cleveland's problems to?

FM: I think it's to me clearly a matter of style. Terrific experience, very bright, he understood the university's potential as an international player. Even though his experience is primarily European, he understood the international aspects of education. So I think potentially he was an excellent choice for the university. But he's basically, I think, a shy person. He couldn't pal

around with people, at least not in Hawai'i. You know, he sort of gives you the feeling that he's an Easterner. And, of course, he looks very distinguished, he's tall and most of us are short. (Chuckles) So he looks kind of formidable and he talks like a diplomat. So he was not easily approachable. I think he was as friendly as he can be. I'm sure he wasn't trying to be aloof. But he wasn't a Hawaiian kind of friendly person. And I think that led to a lot of misunderstanding, especially among the legislators who felt that he was sort of looking down his nose. I'm sure he didn't understand the pidgin English being spoken by some of the legislators and I think that might have insulted them. For whatever reason he had trouble communicating with at least some of the legislators. I've never talked to the governor about Harlan. So it was too bad.

WN: Also too, he was also a lame duck for the majority of the time that you were a vice president also. Did that have any effect? You know, you said that maybe he had trouble getting into Burns' door to talk. Was one of reasons being that he wasn't going to be president for very long?

FM: No, I think (his problems with Burns was) before that. But when he announced his retirement—see, when was I selected? I don't remember.

WN: Nominated in '73 and you actually began in May of '73.

FM: Except that . . .

WN: He actually announced in March of '73 that he was going to be leaving.

FM: Okay, but I wouldn't be presumptuous, I'm sure, about who the next president (would be). So it was basically a transition period. And the board of regents was going through the search process after Harlan announced his retirement. So like any lame-duck situation, things sort of come to a halt. There are no new initiatives, people just marking time and saying, "Well, if there's any big problem that comes up, leave it for the next guy because if Harlan makes a decision on that the next guy may reverse it." So it was a period of just—it was a pause in the administration of the university. And that would happen in any case, any time somebody says, "I'm resigning effective a few months from now." That interim period is. . . .

WN: Okay, well, why don't we stop here and then next time we'll continue with—starting with your presidency.

FM: Okay.

WN: I think that would be a good place to start.

MK: Yeah.

FM: All right.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-24-9-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

January 28, 1997

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the University of Hawai'i presidents oral history project on January 28, 1997, and we're at his office in Mānoa Valley, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay, Dr. Matsuda, we left off, gee, almost two months ago and we, more or less, finished your tenure, one-year tenure . . .

FM: It was last year. (Laughs)

WN: Oh, last year, you're right, November of '96. And we were talking about your tenure as a vice president for business affairs, which was about little over a year. And then in August of 1974, you were named as the ninth president of the University of Hawai'i.

I guess we can start by asking, did you actively seek the job?

FM: Uh, not really. I really had no ambition to become a president of a university. That wasn't one of my life's goals. I guess I happened to be there at the right time when Harlan Cleveland retired—resigned. And I was nominated. What happened was that the secretary of the board [of regents], as I recall, indicated that, you know, ("You've been nominated.) If you're interested, you have to submit a résumé." So I decided I would do that. If I didn't want the job, I would have said, "No, thank you." But I didn't actively seek it in the sense of applying for it or lobbying for it.

And a lot of times, as you may know, in academia, people say, "No, I didn't apply for the job." And that's sort of a facade, you know, (chuckles) just in case they don't get it, right? I don't have to worry about that, because I did get it. But I really didn't—I wasn't out to try to get the job. I would have been happy if somebody good came in and I would continue to serve as a vice president. But as it turned out, I was nominated, so I submitted my application. Well, it wasn't really an application, it was a résumé. So that's how I got involved in it.

WN: Who were your supporters at that time?

FM: You know, I don't know. I don't even know who nominated me. I wasn't, of course, involved in the process at all. Being one of the candidates, nobody told me anything. Just go (chuckles)

for an interview when they ask you to come and talk to them. I'm sure there were people taking sides, you know, choosing sides. I know that there were other candidates, but I don't know who was supporting whom.

WN: Did the issue of localism ever come up at that time?

FM: Not to my knowledge. Perhaps there were some comments, editorial-type comments, saying that, you know, it's about time we had a local president. Meaning, somebody who'd gone through the university or was born in Hawai'i. But not with respect to any particular person's candidacy, I think, just generally. Because as I recall, my good friend Dick Kosaki was also a candidate. So, I think people were saying, maybe there was a time in our history when there were not qualified local candidates. But now that there are some that maybe it's time to have a local president.

WN: I think lot of this was in reaction to, say, Harlan Cleveland's tenure.

FM: That might have been. That's understandable. The other part is maybe local pride. And it may go beyond just the university because during, before the war, and after the war, (many) of the large businesses were still importing their top executives, middle management even, they were all importing from outside. Same thing with law firms. So I think there was a general sentiment, at least on the part of the local community, that all the good jobs are going to Mainlanders. And it's about time that local people, whether in business or the professions or academia, they were given a chance, at least, to show their stuff.

If you stayed only in Hawai'i, then you suffer by comparison in terms of your track record, compared to somebody on the Mainland who's been to several institutions, maybe well-known institutions. So, if you go strictly by what's on paper, I think many times, the local guys are at a disadvantage. As they say, they know where you have warts. Whereas, the guy from the Mainland, you get, basically, what he tells you what he's done and that's all the good stuff. And the references that he or she provides are supportive of (the candidate). So, the local candidate in Hawai'i has those couple of disadvantages.

So I think when they were talking about having a local person, it was not so much focused on the presidency of the university but it was more a general comment. And I think it applied to faculty as well. We have a lot of imported faculty. And lot of our own good graduates could not get teaching jobs at the university because of a policy of at least some of the departments that you don't hire your own graduates. I think, academically speaking, that makes sense, say, if you were in Massachusetts 'cause (there are) several other institutions that you can (apply to). But if you're in Hawai'i, the university is the only game in town, then that becomes a real problem.

So, anyway, because of those various reasons, there were comments being made, I think, that it's about time we look at local candidates seriously.

WN: So given that movement and given the other candidates, who we don't really have to name, did you feel you were qualified for the job, first of all?

FM: Uh, (pause) not an unqualified [candidate], yes.

(Laughter)

FM: There's a whole spectrum of qualifications that a [university] president should have. And I think I met some of them, and maybe was short on some of the others. Although I'd been with the university in one form or the other for a long time, I basically operated at the faculty level. I was department chairman for a while, but that's still operating basically as a faculty member. No real experience in dealing with academia outside of your department. And then I took a leave of absence that stretched out. But when I came back, I came back as a business vice president. And there, you get a different slice of the university.

What most people who come up through the ranks [do], you might say, even though they might go through several institutions to gain the experience, they typically become, first, of course faculty members, and then chair of the department, maybe an assistant or associate dean so you get to know the college, and then from there to a vice president level, and then finally to a president. So by the time you get to the president, you understand or have experience with all (academic) aspects of a university.

Having said that, there are huge differences in universities. If you take a state university like the University of Hawai'i, it's a system so it includes the community colleges as well, and compare that against, say, a presidency of a four-year college, the experience is not totally transferable. Because the issues that you encounter in a state university [system] compared to a small, private college, for example, they're totally different institutions. They live in different worlds. The only common denominator is the academic content. But even there, it's different because you take a small, liberal arts college, you don't have the large research institutes that the [large] university has. You don't have that very close, intimate interaction with the community. A private college may be very good, but it's sort of inwardly directed, right? Not having been a private college president, I don't know, but my experience as a student has been basically in the private universities. Rose Poly was private and, of course, MIT, is sort of public in the sense that's an international university, but it wasn't a state-supported university. So I think I understood the differences.

So, to answer your question, was I qualified? I think, yes, in some respects and maybe not so in some other respects.

WN: You think the time was ripe for someone with administrative/business background to take over as president of the University of Hawai'i, as opposed to, say, an academician?

FM: Yes, say, a professor of history or something like that, which is. . . . Or a professor of philosophy. In that sort of traditional image of a university president, you think of a scholar who's excelled in his field. And very often, they make excellent presidents and sometimes they make lousy presidents. But to answer your question, I think the time was such that some of the problems faced by the university were external problems dealing with the legislature, credibility with the community, et cetera. And that, surely, is one of the responsibilities of a president. We had internal problems as well as external problems. But budget problems, relationship with the governor, the legislature, relationship with the [faculty] union, which had just been formulated, those were all important aspects of the presidency.

WN: And so, when I talked about academician, I'm not saying you weren't because you had all the qualifications in academia, you know, in the hard sciences, of course. But that ten-year span

that you were the head of the Department of Transportation, I guess, hardened you toward state politics and so forth. So did you feel that those ten years prepared you pretty well for what you were going to be facing?

FM: Not really. Remember what I told you? The governor said, (chuckles) "Leave politics to me," so I didn't get involved in politics. And if anything, I think I was a source of problems (chuckles) for the governor because I was not very *akamai* politically. I just did what I thought was needed. I tried to do a good job as director of transportation without playing politics. So, no, in that respect. And, you know . . .

WN: Yeah. I'm sorry. I didn't really mean politically, but I meant more administratively. Being able to manage resources, manage personnel, and so forth.

FM: Yes and no, again. Yes, in the respect that some of the issues were very similar because both the University [of Hawai'i] and the Department of Transportation use civil service personnel. We had civil service personnel, so I had to deal with people like David Trask in transportation. And guess what? When the grounds keepers, the AF—not the . . .

WN: The UPW [United Public Workers]?

FM: UPW. You know, when they strike, I'm dealing with [UPW head] Gary Rodrigues. [The UPW waged a statewide strike in 1979.] And the Department of Transportation also had Gary Rodrigues. And it so happened that the white-collar workers [Hawai'i Government Employees Association] didn't strike [in 1979], but if they had struck, I'd be dealing with David Trask. So, yes, that experience was important.

But the most important human resource that we have is the faculty. And there, it was a brand-new ball game, because we had (a brand-new) union [University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly]. And nobody knew how to deal with the union. I certainly didn't. I mean, with a faculty union. And in fact, I strongly believed that there shouldn't be a faculty union. And the frustrating part was, I couldn't speak out against it. 'Cause when you're negotiating, it's unfair labor practice (chuckles) to (go public). But for that very important aspect of university management or governance, I didn't have the experience. But I would say, neither did anyone else.

As far as the academics themselves are concerned, I thought I was as qualified as anybody and maybe more so than some of the candidates because of my research experience. I'd done research. I knew what big research was. Maybe some of the other candidates may not have had that kind of experience.

And having attended excellent universities, I think I understood academic excellence. You could argue, well, these were science-, technology-type institutions and that's true. But if you looked at MIT and you looked at their curriculum and the quality of the program, it's not just science and technology. They've got an excellent program that includes the humanities and social sciences. So you kind of get the feel for what excellence means and what it feels like and what it tastes like. So, I felt that in that respect, I was qualified.

MK: You know, earlier, you mentioned that when you applied for the presidency, you had to go to some interviews, right?

FM: Yes, as part of the selection process.

MK: Would you remember some of the concerns that selection committee had in the interviews?

FM: (Chuckles) No, I don't remember. No, I'm sorry I don't recall the questions that were asked or discussed. I'm sure they asked me, "What's your philosophy?" and "What are the issues?" et cetera. But I don't recall.

WN: Just to help jog your memory, there was a quote from Harriet Mizuguchi who was the chair, I think, at that time, of the board of regents. And I think one of the major issues was the issue of governance, university. I think this was in the wake of the Larry Price-Wytze Gorter affair in which the board, instead of checking with the administration, sort of steamrolled a five-year contract for Coach Price [in May 1974]. And Wytze Gorter, being [Mānoa campus] chancellor under Harlan Cleveland, resigned as a result of that. I think four other administrators resigned also, before you came on board, I think.

FM: Yes, I recall that.

WN: I recall that one of the issues upon you taking office was, you know, this issue needs to be resolved.

FM: Oh, yes.

WN: So what was the relationship between the administration and the board of regents?

FM: I don't recall, though, whether or not that was posed as a question during the interview. You know, "How would you have handled it and what do you think?" I think if--I'm sort of making it up because I don't remember it, but my position has always been that the board provides policy guidance. They don't get involved in administration. That's the principle. The actual behavior of the board was quite different, of course. One of the things that I had to work at during my tenure as president was to try to minimize the board's involvement in the academic and administrative level and really look at educational issues and policies. That's what the board should do. If we discussed it, and I'm assuming that we must have, that's the sort of position that I would have stated. But, frankly, I don't recall.

WN: Okay. Wally [Wallace S.] Fujiyama, who was your classmate at McKinley . . .

FM: No, he's younger than I.

WN: Younger, okay. (Chuckles)

FM: He was younger, but he died.

WN: He was a very controversial figure on the board. He was a strong advocate for hiring local people and so forth. As I look through the articles and so forth, it seems like some of the things were linked together. For example, Larry Price. Larry Price was a local boy becoming coach of a national program such as University of Hawai'i. And Wytze Gorter resigning. You know, Wytze Gorter being someone from the outside essentially. It seems like there's a lot of parallels. And it seemed like that was the tone of the times when you took office.

FM: Yeah, I think . . .

WN: Did you feel that? Did you feel pressure because you're a local person?

FM: Yes, in some respects that's true, but. . . I was aware that that issue was out there. It didn't affect me in what I did or how I thought about problems. And again, I guess my experience may be different from the typical local person. You know, like, I'm the 442nd generation. But if we talk about war experiences, mine is unique.

(Laughter)

FM: You know, I spent time in Europe among nonlocals, let's say, using this particular focus. And then I went and did my studies on the Mainland. There were a few local boys there with me, but in a predominantly—like there were five of us in a student body of (six hundred). It was a small, private university. Then, of course, when I went to MIT, it's totally international. One of my best friends was from England, another one from Norway. So when I come back to Hawai'i, I didn't feel myself as being a local in the sense of many of my friends that I grew up with feel that they are local. Okay? So I'm aware of that issue, but it didn't color my thinking that it's us against them, like some of the others (may have) felt. I guess my view was, it's all of us. You know, we're all together. I should say some of my best friends were faculty from outside.

(Laughter)

FM: You know, there are people that I really enjoy because of what they do. I'm interested in science and technology. So people that work in that area, I became good friends with and it didn't matter (where they came from).

WN: I guess my question wasn't meant to say that you had a provincial view of things. But it was more, did you feel any pressure from the local community to make the university a local place? Like hiring more island administrators or to promote local programs, anything like that?

FM: Local programs, yes, in the sense of making the university programs more, say, responsive to local needs. Yes, I think that sort of thing, certainly. It was my belief and policy that when it came to administrative people, we would do better by hiring locally. And I think part of that is my experience working with Jack Burns and trying to use local talent where they're equal or better. But we wouldn't consciously select somebody who was less qualified because he's local. Other things being equal, we would select somebody who understood the local community. And that's in the administrative area. These are the, say, the fiscal officer types or human resources type.

But when you get into the academic side, there, I had a different view. I said, here, we get the best. If you have to go to Minnesota to get the person, or Japan, or wherever, we'd look for the best person. But I don't think that view was different or controversial.

I've always felt that some of the best people we have at the university are the secretaries. You know, (chuckles) I tell people, they run the university. They have their network. They can make things happen. They're all local. And they're bright, dedicated people. And to me, in many respects, they were the strength of the university. Of course, you get the scholarly papers

coming out and all that, they [faculty] get all the glory and they should, but without the support staff, many things wouldn't happen.

So, yes, there were local versus nonlocal issues. But at least in the things that I was involved in, I don't think it was controversial because most of these faculty who come from other places—not all, maybe, but most of them—after they work with the local staff, they say, boy, they're the best people they've ever run into. They're loyal, dedicated, work hard, competent.

I think maybe the Larry Price issue was very (chuckles) clearly local versus nonlocal, right. But to jump ahead a little, when [men's basketball coach] Bruce O'Neill was let go, his replacement wasn't a local versus nonlocal issue. In fact, I went to see John Wooden [of] UCLA, a very famous (basketball) coach. I went to see him for recommendations on who we should hire. And I did that without getting the board involved or anything. That was maybe kind of dumb, because actually I didn't know anything about basketball and I didn't know anything about intercollegiate athletics. All I knew is that we needed to get a good, clean credible replacement. So, to me, the local issue was a nonissue.

In terms of faculty and staff, what was at issue was students. Local or resident. Maybe I should say resident versus nonresident. And availability of hard-to-get slots, like, say, in the law school or medical school for nonresident students. There, there was a lot of interest and complaints, in some cases, by legislators and others when they find that their son or their constituent's daughter didn't get into medical school when they look at the list and say, "How come that (nonresident) got in?" And those kind of issues.

And I think that everyone understood that these professional schools were created primarily for the purpose of educating local kids. The taxpayers of the state build these expensive programs so that their kids who could not be accepted at the Mainland institutions—not because they were not smart enough—because the Mainland institutions gave first preference to their (own) kids. Occasionally there would be some people from the Mainland who had their roots in Hawai'i. And those would be accepted, but they would show Mainland high schools or Mainland addresses. And I think one or two may (have slipped) in who had no discernible local ties. But that was (very) controversial, because in that period, getting into a law school or medical school was so difficult.

But we had a process. We had committees on which not only faculty sat but people in the profession, as well as students. The result may not always be perfect, but I had confidence in the process. So, I didn't worry about it. If somebody could show me that the process was distorted or compromised, then, yes, I'd be worried about it. But nobody could prove that to me. And always, people who don't get in are the ones grumbling. But when you have 300 applications for 20 positions, some people are going to get disappointed and some very good people are not going to get in.

WN: I guess that issue is related to what we had talked about earlier. Should the university serve the local community first or should it try to attain international and national recognition. Was that a hard balance to achieve?

FM: Yes, it's a tricky balance, but, to me, it was clear that the University of Hawai'i is not purely a local university, that we would do a disservice to the people of Hawai'i and to the students of Hawai'i if we created a purely local university. It would really limit their growth and their

opportunities if we did that. So it is in their best interest and the state's best interest to make the University of Hawai'i a—well, international university. May be a little presumptuous, but that we ought to open (up the university), open up the eyes of our students to what's out there, and (let them) interact with people that come from different places. By doing that, I think we really provide the students with the kind of opportunities that they need. So, to me, it was very clear. Now, you may argue, should it be 50 percent or 10 percent? Anyway, the question of degree. And that's, I think, to me, debatable, but whether or not we should do it was not. But not everyone agreed with me, especially if their son or daughter couldn't get into the law school, you know.

WN: What about the faculty?

FM: Faculty, I think was very clearly international in this sense. I don't know whether this is fair to them or not, but for them, being able to attract good, strong candidates for their graduate programs was very important to them. At the undergraduate level, they understand this is a state university. But when you get to the graduate level, the kind of graduate students that you bring in, really [can] affect the faculty member's own future. By getting good research assistants wanting to work on his projects or her projects and coming out with a published paper, of course, you share the credit with the students but your name comes first, right? So having good students to help you in your research is very important. And so, my, you might say, conjecture, 'cause I can't give you facts or figures, my conjecture is that the faculty was more interested in getting good students at the graduate level (from the large out-of-state pool).

It's easy to have a good, strong program if you're well funded and you select only the best students. It's like Punahou saying, "Our students have (high SAT scores)." Of course. You started with good students and doesn't take very much input to keep them up there. The teaching effort that went into (the education) and the benefit that the student derived from it is measured by the change or the difference (in SAT scores), not just the (absolute score). If you take a student that was (in the top 10 percent) and he went up to (the top 8 percent) the contribution that the school made (may) not (be) very much. But if you took a student who was down (at 50 percent) and then (brought up to the top 20 percent), then the contribution of the school is huge.

Diverting our discussion a little bit, but when you want to compare, say, SAT scores among schools, that's the wrong comparison. The comparison should be how much change did the school accomplish. And if those changes are huge, even though the absolute value is low, that school and the teachers should really get a gold medal for what they did for the kids. If some kid went up three grades in one year but he's still behind the pack, you don't say, "Oh, he's a dumb kid and the teacher didn't do a good job," which is what happens now.

So in a state university, we have a whole range. And our job is to take each student and take him as far as he or she can go.

MK: Between those two competing needs: one, educating the local population who is able to come to the UH, versus, say, graduate education and research, were they, in your eyes, equal in weight or would one take a little bit more weight than the other?

FM: Well, that's hard to say. Obviously, they're equally important. I may have been stronger, relatively speaking, for a strong graduate program than I'm pretty sure than many of the regent

members and certainly most of the politicians. But maybe they didn't fully understand my reasons. And it goes back to the students. Among our students who have gone through, say, some good public school education or maybe some mediocre, but if you want to stretch them as far as they can go, just concentrating on the undergraduate level is not going to do it.

The student has to be exposed to the intellectual excitement and the exposure to really first-rate minds among students and among graduate students they (have a) lot of contact with, and among the faculty. But that spells graduate education. So if that part is de-emphasized and you don't bring in the good, competent exciting graduate students—not always (chuckles)—but if you don't have that going on at the same time in a state university, then you take away quite a bit from that university. So that, to me, is a primary reason.

And the second is that your faculty may be good, competent teachers and we need them, that's important, but you have a different kind of faculty if you take away or if you de-emphasize graduate-level education and the research activity that is, more or less, synonymous with graduate education. So I think graduate education is very important.

And in fact, my idea—again, jumping forward a little bit—was that Mānoa was trying to do too much. They were trying to cover too much. And from the students' point of view, what they needed to get or what they wanted to get and what they were willing to work hard to get, could be achieved in different ways. So if a student, say, fooled around in high school, but then he said, "I want to go to college," Mānoa doesn't have to take that person. That person can go to a community college, get up to speed, and then transfer to Mānoa. So, I was for raising the entry requirement for Mānoa, reducing the number of students, but making sure that the students who are not able to come to Mānoa had a way [to] get to Mānoa if and when they're good enough.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: So, to make Mānoa into a very solid undergraduate program with a good, strong graduate program, which may be equal in size, maybe even bigger, to me, was a reasonable arrangement to try to get to.

WN: Did you run into any kind of problems trying to convince that philosophy . . .

FM: Oh, yes.

WN: . . . to lawmakers, for example?

FM: No, no, no. To the [Mānoa] faculty. Faculty saw that as a diversion of resources. Because if you cut down the size of (undergraduates at) Mānoa, and those students go to the community colleges, (their concern was that Mānoa's) budget (will be reduced and positions will be cut). So, there was strong opposition to that idea. But that's not the only idea (laughs) they didn't like.

(Laughter)

MK: How about the board of regents? How did they react to that idea?

FM: I think the board was more open to that idea. For the teaching faculty at Mānoa, it meant jobs. And I can understand that, you know. But my point was, if the students go (to the community colleges, they will need teachers), you could go there [i.e., teach at the community colleges]. But for them, instead of being a Mānoa professor, now you're a community college instructor and that's a demotion (in their view). You know, that's a matter of pride and ego. And anyway, it's not something that you do overnight. But if you set that goal, over time, you can get there without, I think, anybody getting hurt. But you have to agree that that's the goal. But it was hard to do.

[With] the regents, we didn't have formal discussions on that, I've had informal discussions. And the people I talked to were supportive of the idea. The process that was involved, it was in the master plan. We called it the academic plan. And I had difficulty with the Mānoa academic plan because—I kept rejecting it because the Mānoa plan basically said everything is important and bigger is better. And I asked them to set priorities. They kept coming back saying, "No, everything is important. You can't pit one program against the other," which I totally disagreed with.

And I know that when we were trying to do [University of Hawai'i-]West O'ahu, for example—that fits my idea of providing alternatives—there was strong opposition to West O'ahu on the Mānoa campus. Again, basically, they saw that as a resource question. And that's a people fault, it's not something that's unique to the Mānoa faculty. Anytime a person's job is threatened, the person's going to be against it. But as the president, I can't make decisions or recommend plans purely based on self-preservation. We have to identify a goal that makes sense and then find a way to implement it in a way that a person's economic and professional well-being are (protected). And it takes time. Anyway, it's not easy to downsize an institution. If there's a financial exigency, everybody has to be downsized. But if you're going to say, consciously, you're going to downsize one and take resources and send it somewhere else, and if you ask them to vote on it, (chuckles) they're going say no, right?

WN: Right. You know, you were quoted once when you took office—you probably don't remember saying this, but something to the effect that an executive taking office is sort of chosen or, in other words, someone needs to be appropriate for the job. In other words, depending on the time someone is selected or who was selected, it depends on what's happening at the time. Now, what you were just discussing, downsizing and so forth, of prioritizing, these are words that are used today at the university. But prior to that, your predecessors, for example, Thomas Hamilton, Harlan Cleveland were presiding at a time of unprecedented growth throughout the university.

FM: In Hamilton's time, yes. Harlan was beginning to have troubles.

WN: Okay. So, I would imagine some of the problems that Harlan had were related to this budget situation. And in essence, you inherited a lot of that. So my question is, whenever there's a budget problem, priorities become a major focus. Was that an overriding concern in your administration?

FM: Not early on. A budget is always a problem, but I guess I felt that Mānoa could be better. I felt that the community colleges were young (and) vigorous, they had lots of ideas and worked hard, that the community colleges showed a lot of potential. I was concerned about, quite aside from the budget, the potential for Mānoa, that it was spreading itself too thin and really, Mānoa offering a lot of remedial courses. They're reaching out to grab students just so that they can say, "Our enrollment went up," rather than holding to the standards. I forget the numbers, but our acceptance level was among the lowest in the state universities, SAT levels. And then we were offering remedial courses to qualify them. And I thought that was wrong.

I could understand that happening when we didn't have community colleges. So you say, "Let's give 'em a chance. Get 'em in, if they can't cut it, flunk 'em out." But when we offer the (community college) alternative to those students, you're not denying them education. Give them a chance to get up to speed, then transfer. For Mānoa—and this is where the budget comes in—the resources that we devote to Mānoa, to spend (any) amount of that to do community college or even high school level work, I thought was wrong.

WN: So, it wasn't just the budget situation in early times.

FM: No. I think I would probably get myself into trouble anyway, even if we had the money. I said, "The money is being misallocated. That money should go to the community colleges, where they can do a better job." Because the teachers at the community colleges, at least at that time, their sole mission in life was teaching. (And they took pride in giving the students a second chance.) (Furthermore,) they taught four courses [per semester], where a typical Mānoa faculty [member] at that time was teaching two courses and getting paid more on the average. So in terms of getting better results for the students, because the students will be working in typically smaller classes at community colleges, instead of sitting in a large lecture hall with 200 others where the faculty member doesn't even know you. That the whole arrangement was wrong. Maybe historically, it made sense, but not anymore.

So, it was budget in the sense that we could get better results with the same amount of money and what some Mānoa faculty didn't understand is that if we did that and got better results for the students, happier parents and happier students, we'd get better treatment from the legislature. But if we can do the job, equal or better job, at less cost by taking X amount of dollars, sending it to the community colleges, what's remaining—because it doesn't cost as much—could be used by Mānoa to upgrade their programs. But that's not the way they looked at it.

MK: I think, too, in the community, there's also that prestige factor added on to attendance at the UH versus attendance at, say, KCC or Leeward.

FM: Yes.

MK: So that probably complicated it, too.

FM: Yes, except that I would have said, it's the graduation that counts, not the attendance, right? I mean, having a 450 SAT [score] and being enrolled at Mānoa and then flunking out two semesters later, is nothing to brag about. But, say, starting off at KCC and graduating from Mānoa, now, that's something that you can be proud of. Especially if Mānoa's image, prestige, and substance is higher than what it was before. I think the top level of Mānoa, the best

students and the best teachers are terrific. But taken as a whole, I think the image is that—because we dilute it so much—the image is not as good as some other places. I would say the best of our faculty and best of our students compare favorably with any institution in the world, public and private.

MK: I think I remember in one of the articles you had stated that one of your goals was for students to be able to go the UH and to graduate from the UH feeling that they had gotten a good education.

FM: And really, that (quality) has to be compared to, you know, compared to what? Compared to Berkeley or compared to Michigan? If the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa attains that stature, then we can really say to the people of Hawai'i that "We've used your money well."

MK: I notice that recently the university really makes a point of trying to get as many valedictorians from the local schools to come to the UH. There's something called the Regents' Scholars. They're really trying to make a push to attract and keep the highly qualified students here in the islands, rather than on the Mainland. When you first became president, was the UH then attracting . . .

FM: No, we didn't have any marketing program like that.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: You've also stated, too, and I think this may have been your philosophy throughout your term as well, the university can and should be run similar to a business.

FM: Only with respect to the business aspects. We use public funds, we have to be accountable. And you have to account for these things and you have to run it on a timely basis. And it's not really the university's fault, because we were so closely tied in with the state government. Everything we did was controlled by DAGS [Department of Accounting and General Services] and DP—what was that? The personnel services, DPS.

Not everything, 'cause the faculty, we had control of that. But so much of what we do, even if we hire a faculty member, when they get paid through the state payroll system, sometimes they go two, three months without a paycheck when they first start. And that's the sort of thing I was referring to. It doesn't make sense. I don't remember saying that exactly in that way, at least, but maybe I had in the back of my mind that the university had to be autonomous so we could realize internal efficiencies that we cannot as a government agency.

But it's not like a business in a more important respect. And I can give you an anecdote on this. When my now good friend Jack [John A.] Hoag became a board [of regents] member [in 1974], I remember a board meeting that we had at the East-West Center. He was, at that time, from the Big Island and he was working for First Hawaiian Bank. And we were discussing something. I guess I had made a recommendation (of some sort), so Jack's comment was, "That's not how we do things in the bank."

So I said, "You're right. This is not a bank. This is a university." I think we talked about the decision-making process, getting faculty involved and all that. So, in that respect, the university's very clearly not a business. But the way you handle the business aspects of a

university should be done like a private business, not like government.

WN: So, the way you ran the university, was it more closer to a business or was it closer to, say, another branch of the state government?

FM: Neither. Like a university, because the university is a different animal. You know, we were talking about [former governor] George Ariyoshi a little. When I talked to him about why the university (shouldn't) be treated like another state agency, he would say, "Why should the university be different?"

My answer is, "Of course, because it is different. It is a unique institution." That's the important part. If anyone is going to be a president of the university, he has to understand that the university is different. It's not a business, it's not government. It's a very unique institution with very talented people that will go off in all directions if you let it. But if you try to control it, you kill their initiative and creativity. So, managing that enterprise is a very tricky business.

People ask me, "Which did you enjoy most, transportation or the university?" And transportation, I say, well, gave me different kinds of challenges and satisfaction. But the university was more difficult. Because (in the) Department of Transportation, if there are any internal differences, you settle it. I give the order, saying, "Okay, this is my decision." Then you go face Life of the Land or Save Our Surf and others, and they sue, and you have a lot of problems. But the problems are between the department, which you represent, and the public, which you are trying to serve, and they have different ideas. That's the government, that's the system.

In the university, the problems are internal. We're talking about Mānoa, anyway. It's not that the legislature said they don't want to do that. It's our own faculty fighting that idea. The union, all the major issues on the university are internal. And when the dust settles, you still have to (depend on them to build a great university). So, as a management problem, I can think of no organization that's more difficult than a university.

WN: And what was the role of the president amongst all of these factional, internal problems?

FM: Basically, persuasion. Because if you did it by fiat, it wouldn't work. There are people there who could totally ignore you and do what they want. And sure, you can take 'em on and discipline them. And I did on a few of those. But then, it's a question of, okay, who wins? The institution loses because unless you have a faculty that's dedicated and committed to the institution and to the profession, you cannot make it work.

And that's what some of the regents don't understand. Because they come from, by and large, business or professional backgrounds. They're used to saying, "Okay. This is what we decided, so you guys do it, and if you don't do it, you're fired," right? It doesn't work that way in a university. In a university, the faculty knows more about their business than the president, or the regents, or anybody else. So, if you're going to make decisions about academic programs, you've got to listen to the faculty because they're on the front lines, they deal with the students, they deal with the funding agencies for research. So, that part is valuable, almost inviolate. But they're also selfish human beings, as we all are. And their human motivations (and weaknesses) you have to be able to manage. So, it's an interesting job, tough job.

WN: I'll read a quote that you made back in 1982 and it's related to what you were talking about. I just want you to react to this. "Any organizational structure can be made to work if you have the right people in it. The people are more important than the structure. Common in the commercial world is a holding company that provides basic resources and determines missions of its various units. But then lets these wholly owned subsidiaries operate within their sphere to get the job done. The university system is like that. We give our units the resources, we review their programs, but they essentially do the work. It's a commonly used system both in the commercial world, as well as in the educational world." Does that pretty much sum up your governing philosophy?

FM: Yeah, yeah. Well, I called it, within the university—I don't know who I was addressing at that point, but . . .

WN: [*Honolulu Star-Bulletin*].

FM: Okay. I called it the strong chancellor system. Each campus or major unit had a chancellor. And the programs on that campus was the chancellor's and the faculty's responsibility. So, say, if the community colleges had a problem, and let's say, one of the problems is the lack of coordination among courses, course numbers, contents for transferability. You know, faculty may say, "Oh, I'm going to teach this course so I can call it anything I want to. I can do anything I want in it."

And we tell him, "No, you can't. 'Cause the students from Kapi'olani may transfer to Leeward or vice versa, and there has to be some common understanding. If it's different, let's call them different things. But if you're going to give it the same name, make it the same." And also the transferability to Mānoa.

Those kind of issues, basically, I expect those guys to solve. If I do it as a president, then it's by fiat. I can make it happen, but that's not the right way. In regard to that remark—well, Harlan started the system, which I adopted. The system office would be looking at the broad educational issues, like the one we said, "What's Mānoa's mission? What kind of resources would it need?" Rather than argue about, say, whether or not a particular program should add another course or not. You know, those things, I didn't want to get involved in. I didn't think I should get involved in.

So if we decide that, say, UH-Hilo had a certain mission and we asked them to come up with an academic plan to achieve that mission and set priorities, and they ask for money, we would say, okay, our job is to look at their request and their mission and community colleges and West O'ahu and Mānoa, and make some judgment as to their priorities versus (other campuses), and then make some resource allocation. But once we decide what that is, then tell them, "Okay, it's your job to get it done. You told us that's what you want to do and these are your goals, now go do it." So, in a business situation, it's easier because success is measured in terms of the bottom line. But in (our) case, it's much more difficult to assess the performance. But that's the idea.

There was a common lack of understanding of what I was trying to do. And part of that is understandable in the sense that what we did was not entirely up to us because we were controlled by B and F [Department of Budget and Finance] and others. And at the faculty level, especially if you're a new arrival, you can't distinguish (between) our decision and

somebody else's decision, who screwed up and why it takes so long, et cetera.

Looking at the system office, what is the appropriate role for the system office? We had things like the personnel department that's centralized. The accounting and the fiscal section was centralized. There were people who disagreed with that, that personnel should be decentralized, or the fiscal office. Each campus should do its own computing. In those days, we were still in the mainframe era, so, the computer operation was centralized as well.

So people would look at all of those in terms of number of people and budget and say the system office is too big, as if we had people that were involved in programs. This was basically just administrative support people that I felt had to be centralized. Like, say, if you're going to deal with a union, which is centralized, you cannot have five different or seven different campuses making their own rules because then the union will whipsaw us. And in terms of administering laws and (regulations), we cannot have different chancellors making their own interpretation of what the rules are. So there are certain things that had to be uniform and those things were centralized. Certainly the computer system, the accounting system that we used, and the kind of reports that are generated, et cetera, at that time, had to be centralized.

So, that became a major issue, I think, primarily at Mānoa. Because they [Mānoa faculty] wanted to be able to—because we were kind of forcing them to give us an academic plan. And we were also proposing post-tenure review at that time and, of course, program review. All of these things, they had a high level of insecurity. And they saw, I guess, my administration as trying to take power, which was not my intent at all. (Systemwide issues were) not something that they can unilaterally decide. It's something that the system has to finally make a decision on. Because if Hilo says, "We want to develop a medical school."

We would say, "Absolutely not. We don't need two medical schools in this state." So we would overrule the chancellor. So we would retain systemwide integrated functions and the associated authority. They don't like it. You want to do whatever you want to do and I'm an impediment, so. . . .

But anyway, in that respect, what I said there applies, that if you take a company, if you have subsidiaries, then you have to manage it in such a way that the parent company, the holding company, does control resources, mission. And if there is duplication, it's a planned duplication, not the inadvertent kind. But it's a concept I don't think was understood very well. And probably that's my fault (rather) than theirs because I failed to explain it well enough.

WN: So there was this feeling that the chancellors should be given much more autonomy than they actually had.

FM: From my point of view, they had it. I had chancellors who understood the authority that they had, who (made decisions), and got into trouble with the faculty. And other chancellors who were weaker would pass the buck to me and basically say, well, that (the president is) telling them to do this. In the case of Mānoa, I never got from Mānoa an academic plan that showed priorities. When all the other campuses and part of the sub-systems had come up with academic plans that shows priorities, Mānoa failed to do so. Well, maybe not failed, they refused to do that. And to me, that meant weak administration. But the guys who were strong

got into trouble with their faculty and with their campus. But that's what they're there for. 'Cause if they're not going to do that, I don't need them. So I characterized that as a strong chancellor system at various times. But when you have a weak chancellor, that's perceived as a strong president who tries to run everything.

WN: This is a good prelude to maybe next time. Maybe next time we can start talking about the Durwood Long situation.

FM: Okay.

WN: That's a good time to. . . . I was going to bring it up right now because we're right on the subject and I thought it seems like you're about ready to say his name, right? It's forming on your lips. But I thought, such a complex thing. It'll give you time to look at some clippings . . .

FM: That's a very interesting issue. On that one, we may have some problems in publishing it while he's still alive.

WN: Okay, well, why don't we. . . . Well, let's think about it for next time.

FM: I don't mind telling you about it, it's just that that particular section—and I don't even know what he's doing now, whether he's dead or alive—but it was such a difficult issue for him. And for me, it was a difficult issue, but my reputation and future wasn't at stake. His was. So, if he's doing anything that is useful and productive at this point, I don't want anything that I say now to affect that. So, other than that. . . .

WN: Again, you'll have a chance to review it before it ever goes out. Why don't we just keep an open mind on all of this. If it's not appropriate, then we can always. . . .

FM: If it makes sense, I can tell you what happened. And then that particular chapter can be set aside and then added later when he's no longer living.

WN: I think that's possible. Sure. No problem.

MK: And the way this process works is that after we transcribe everything, it comes back to you and you approve everything before any of it is published. So we can---it'll be okay.

FM: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-25-10-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

February 6, 1997

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the University of Hawai'i presidents oral history project on February 6, 1997, and we're in his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto. This is interview number ten with Dr. Matsuda.

Okay, why don't we begin. We ended last time going off in different directions, but I wanted to pull you back to the time when you were appointed as president of the University of Hawai'i in 1974. And according to newspaper articles, you did seem to have the support of the board of regents.

FM: It was a split, as I understand it. Nobody told me. And the way they do it is, eventually they all agree. They don't say, well, we elected the new president by a vote of six to three or five to four, or whatever. So, after they get through battling, because, say, a faction might support one candidate and the other faction might support the other. They try---sometimes they go to a compromise candidate.

WN: Was the board factionalized at that time?

FM: Well, I understand, and this is only hearsay, but Dick Kosaki—who is a good friend of mine, we went through high school together, and certainly well qualified—was also in serious contention. So, it's more conjecture on my part that—and I've heard roundabout that certain people wanted him, which is fine with me because I think he would have made a fine president. In fact, [as president] I asked him to be chancellor of Mānoa campus. But the public vote, at least, was unanimous. And all the other stuff, I had no direct knowledge of.

WN: It seems to me that it looked like the faculty—I don't know if the faculty really came out, but the faculty was supporting Kosaki.

FM: Yes. I think that was very clear. They saw me as a political animal, which distressed me very much (chuckles) because I'd always thought of myself as apolitical. And that interlude [i.e., as state DOT director] I went there (to perform) a public service. Put my academic career on hold for a couple of years while I do that. Well, it turned out longer than two years, but coming back to the university, to me, was coming home. As far as I was concerned, I had appropriate academic credentials. In fact, I'd probably done more research than (some) of the people on campus at that time. And especially those people who didn't know my prior connection with

the university and my work at Illinois and MIT, only knew me as the director of transportation, right? Whereas Dick Kosaki had been in the university, had done very good work in the university. So, I think preferring him over me by many if not most of the faculty (is understandable). I wouldn't have disagreed that Dick Kosaki was a very viable candidate. And if the board had voted for Kosaki—and remember, I was vice president at that time—I would have felt very comfortable working for Dick as a vice president.

In terms of the university itself, a lot happened while I was gone. Tom Hamilton [1963–69] and Harlan Cleveland [1969–74] each worked there five years. All that time I was out of the university. So, in terms of knowing the university and the people running programs, clearly, Dick was better prepared than I. The question, I think, in the board's mind was, that's looking backward. Looking forward where the university should be going, who would be able to do that. For whatever reason, they felt I was the best one.

WN: Did it ever come out that, okay, since you had been with the state government and, of course, one of the major jobs of the university president was to fight for the budget and lobby for the budget, get along with legislators. Did that ever come out when you were being considered for the job as somebody would be probably better able to deal with the state government than, say, someone else?

FM: I think that undoubtedly was a consideration, although, as I say, I don't know what was involved. I personally felt, though, that Dick has a lot of friends and connections that he's developed over the years. The Legislative Reference Bureau, for example, plays an important part in advising the legislature. His wife [Mildred Doi Kosaki] was the sister of Herman [S.] Doi who ran the Legislative Reference Bureau. And Mildred is a very capable person, (so they were well known and respected by the legislators).

In, say, establishing the community college system or doing the study for it ["Feasibility of Community Colleges in Hawai'i," 1964], [and] West O'ahu, Dick was very effective in a very low key way, very effective in working with the legislature and working with the staff agencies. So, I would say, if anything, in that arena, also, he was better than me. My self-assessment—and you can never trust a self-assessment, but my self-assessment would be that Dick would be more skilled at that. I'm the type that would tell legislators, ("That's the university's) business." (WN chuckles.) Dick would never do that. He'd get the same result but in a much, much smoother way.

WN: Well, you said earlier that it distressed you a lot to be considered political . . .

FM: A politician, yes. Because I considered myself anything but. I may be splitting hairs, but I think of myself as having to operate in the legislative arena. Politics has a whole other connotation that goes beyond just the legislature. Of course, I had to go and defend budgets. I had to go and get to know the legislators, do some lobbying. So, if that's what politics is, yeah, I was involved in politics, (but so was virtually all program directors at the university). But to me, politics is, you know, getting people elected, hiring your friends (chuckles), and things like that, which I actually disassociated myself from. So, I would say, again, self-assessment, I've operated in that arena, I know the senators and the representatives and people in B and F [Department of Budget and Finance]. So, I knew the process, I knew the people. I'm not so sure that I was so skilled at massaging things, (and I certainly did not indulge in horse trading).

And my attitude, basically, in dealing with the legislature, is I don't do things by friendship. I do things on merit. If we have an idea that has merit, I try to sell it. But I never once in my life went to any friends of mine in the legislature—and I had some very good friends—and say, "Do this for me as a personal favor." Never did that. And the reason, of course, is one, it's unethical. And the other part is that you invite politics into your arena, because if that same guy calls me up and says, "Do this as a personal favor to me. Put my nephew in the medical school," what are you going to say? A tit for tat, right? I'm not going to open the university up to that kind of a threat.

Legislators are politicians. Politicians have constituents. Constituents ask for help, they try. And as long as I don't open that door up and say, "Yes, who is it?" (Laughs) But I'm not obligated. Whenever we go into the legislature, we go in on the basis of merit. If you guys don't think it has merit, turn it down, so be it. And the fault may be ours because we didn't do a good enough job to explain and sell it. But no side deals where if you do this for me, I'll do that for you.

WN: Okay, I'll get into talking about the legislature maybe in subsequent interviews. Couple more questions about your appointment. Another criticism aside from you being a quote, unquote, politician, was that you were a hard scientist, engineer, and how sympathetic or supportive you would be of the humanities. I guess this question goes back to what were actually your goals when you took office.

FM: Well, okay. My goals—in one word was excellence. Because we had soft programs. People who were not productive. You can't just keep going off to buy new talent. You have to work with what you have. So, I think the fact that I come from an engineering discipline certainly influenced the way I approach problems. I don't think it influenced my values. As I said earlier, in my childhood, I was reading books all the time. Not books on engineering. If you look at my children, they all love music. And that's because I love music. We had music in our home all the time, (mostly chamber music), when they were growing up. So, things like culture and music are very important to us, to me, as an individual. And the reason I became an engineer is a fluke. I was good in mathematics and science. And it just sort of. . . . (Chuckles) My teachers sort of steered me in that direction.

WN: Did you feel that you were sort of an anomaly in terms of a university president when you look at the stereotype president as being a liberal arts background person as opposed to a hard scientist?

FM: No, I didn't because I think there was a time when a professor of philosophy or humanities made good university presidents. Clearly, in this day and age, nobody says that's the only kind of president a university should have. This age of science and technology, this age. . . . You know, it used to bother me that people define the humanities to exclude science and technology. To me, any person who doesn't understand science and technology cannot understand the world, cannot understand people. The fact that you understand nineteenth-century poetry doesn't [necessarily] make you a well-rounded human being. If you don't know what's going on in economics, in science, social sciences, hard sciences—just the humanities, as such, is a very limited portion of the total body of knowledge. And I was more interested in the whole body of knowledge, not just a specific aspect of. . . .

So, I think that tradition really comes from the small liberal arts colleges. And small liberal

arts colleges grow up to be big liberal arts colleges. And big liberal arts colleges turn out to be large universities. And so, we were talking, in the case of the University of Hawai'i, a large, complex university.

So, no, I didn't feel that I was lacking (in that respect). Because I personally am interested in cultural, what would be considered, well, nonscience. I love poetry, (although I confess I haven't had much time for it). And I love haiku, things like that. Nobody asked me about those. They just assumed that because I'm an engineer, that I'm not interested in those things. And that because I served in government, that I'm a politician. So, they're labeling people. I don't worry about them. Because the image the faculty had of me is so different from my self-image (chuckles) it was kind of distressing.

WN: I can imagine.

FM: But I was philosophical about it. I said, well, it doesn't matter what they think I am because when we work on various academic and campus issues, the action will speak louder than words. I don't have to go and proclaim myself to be more than just an engineer, but if I act like I'm only worried about (science and) engineering, then the label fits. But if I don't, then the label doesn't fit. I guess then I assume that people will forget where I came from or what they thought I was. As a matter of fact, if people ask me now, "During your tenure as president, what did you do for the College of Engineering?" I really can't (WN chuckles) think of anything. My issues were things like New College, ethnic studies, law school, medical school. Almost nothing to do with engineering.

WN: Okay. Do you remember any specific goals and objectives upon taking office?

FM: Yes. Basically—and this may be an engineering approach—basically, I said, we can't be everything to everyone. I felt we were spreading—especially Mānoa—were spreading ourselves too thin. Excellence doesn't come from numbers. Excellence comes from quality. So, since we're a small state, our resources are limited, we have to be careful how we spend those resources. And I'd rather spend the resources in such a way that you develop excellence in a few programs, disciplines. Rather than say or trying to say, we want all of the University of Hawai'i to be excellent.

Excellence is, in a manner of speaking, an absolute term, but also, I think, it's a relative term. Excellent compared to whom? Are we saying we're going to be like Harvard if Harvard is considered a university of excellence? Harvard has a huge endowment. Besides, it's a private university. So are we talking about excellent public universities like Berkeley, Michigan, Wisconsin? I mean, is that what we're talking about? And the answer is yes. But are we talking about across the board? And we say, no, we can't afford that.

It's not a revolutionary (thought), others have (expressed) it. What can we excel at? Being a small state in the middle of the Pacific with the kind of human and natural resources, opportunities. What can we focus on? So, I would say that was my philosophy.

WN: Was it because of the budget situation coming up? For example, what if it was during Hamilton's time? Lot of support for the university, money was coming in. Would you have had to prioritize as well at that time? Would you have?

FM: Oh, yes. I would still focus it. Because no matter what, the resources are limited. You have to remember that the University of Hawai'i, with Mānoa, graduate school, medical and law school, that's a pretty complete university. We had, what, 25,000 students. That's not a small university. So, states with much larger resources support universities of this type. So, for us, it's a real stretch to achieve excellence to be comparable to Michigan. Nobody in his right mind would say Hawai'i has the resources to develop a university like Michigan or Berkeley. So, even in the best of times for Hawai'i, we cannot compete across the board. So, I would say, let's pick our (programs), and in these areas, we're going to compete with the Berkeleys and Michigans. In those areas, that's where we would put our resources. (Excellence is normally considered in terms of scholarship and research, and in terms of graduate programs and research institutes. At the undergraduate level) we want to be good (across the board).

WN: So if you remember, what were these areas?

FM: Our tropical agriculture is one. Ocean, ocean-related activities. Asian studies. Those are the three main areas. Oh, I sort of lumped ocean and astronomy together as being a special opportunity to excel in science, although I guess we could separate them. Say, four instead of three. These are Hawai'i's (niche, we have) the geographic, geological attributes. And our human resources, our very large Asian population. And our resources, faculty, our very strong faculty in Asian studies. In these areas, we can compete nationally and globally.

WN: Another thing that faced you, I guess, was to reorganize the university. You said earlier that you believed in the strong chancellor system. What steps did you take to reorganize the administration?

FM: Basically, the (system) concept was established by Harlan Cleveland. And I looked at it and agreed with that approach. So, I kept it. The difference was that Harlan, like (Al Simone was and) Ken Mortimer is now, was also president [i.e., chancellor] of Mānoa. He was president of the system and also president [chancellor] of Mānoa. And I said that we should have a separate chancellor at Mānoa. Because as a system president, you have a basic conflict. If you're the president of Mānoa and you have to deal with, say, a Hilo problem or the community college, even though in your mind you're being impartial, there's a perception out there that you're favoring Mānoa. I said, separate them. And I guess that was the difference.

But the change that I wanted went beyond that. I started with the board of regents. When I came back to the university, I found that the budget for the university was (prepared) between our budget people and B and F. The program people would put their request together and then our budget guys would work with B and F and put the budget together. And I found that the board had nothing to do with it. So, at the end, when everything was settled, the board (would be informed), "This is our budget."

I said, "Wait a minute. What role does the board play, since the budget, to me, is an instrument for implementing board policy and board vision for the University of Hawai'i." And it's not something for the bureaucrats to manipulate and change numbers and argue position by position. They're mired in the details. Nobody was looking at the big picture. And many times, the answer was, basically, "Well, there's no other way you can do it. We don't have the time."

I said, "Well, we're going to make time." So we started a process where the budget is

prepared, goes to the board for review (and approved). So, we got [in the budget] what the university really needs, wants, deserves, with the board's approval. The board may say, "Okay. That's the direction we want to go. The budget reflects (our policy)." And then, we got to put that into B and F's budget-making schedule, which is geared to all the other departments where they don't have to do that. It's the department head working with B and F, working with the governor to create a budget.

But our process is different. So we had to start the budget process when we don't even know what the legislature was going to give us. And certainly before the B and F tells you, "Okay, this is going to be your share." By then, it's too late. So we come up with a budget [first] and say, "This is what we want. This is what we need."

And B and F says, "This is what you're going to get." And then we have to adjust it. So that process is very cumbersome and I can understand why people in the past didn't want to do it.

So, the most important function of the board [in the past] was in the wastebasket. You know, "We can't be bothered with it." But I insisted that we change that. With some difficulty we accomplished that. So now routinely, we say, "This is the board of regents' budget." But when I [first] went there, it wasn't. It was B and F's budget. So, nowadays or at least when I was president, toward the end, once we had done this, we'd go through a hearing. They had the governor's budget there, (which) is what B and F (creates). But very often, (the legislature would) ask us, "What did the university ask for?"

Now we can say, "Here's the regents' budget." To the extent that the university has some autonomy. That is very important. In the past, there was no university budget. Only the B and F budget. It [i.e., this budget system] was okay for the Department of Transportation but it was not okay for the university.

WN: What do you say about the notion that many people had that the university is another branch of the state government?

FM: That's total bunk. I disagree with that. That was my biggest disagreement with George Ariyoshi. And I think, unfortunately, George reflected the very strong majority, almost (chuckles) unanimous view of legislators (and state bureaucrats) that the university is just a department of the state that uses tax money. (I am happy to say that this is no longer true.) So, to address that issue, remember the '78 constitutional convention, I think I mentioned that that was the opportunity to address the issue [of autonomy for the University of Hawai'i]. I think we did. We strengthened the (autonomy) language (for the) university. We got some changes made, but the practical effect was zero until very recently.

WN: And you were on the [governor's] cabinet also, right?

FM: Yes and no. You mean as a university president?

WN: Right.

FM: Depends on how you define "cabinet." When they had cabinet meetings, they're (supposed) to talk about state affairs. And in that respect, yes, (I was) a member of the cabinet. But cabinet members are (also) part of the governor's political organization. So, they often talk about the

political aspects, and at that point, the university president has no business being there. So after I became president, I was invited to cabinet meetings, but (when the agenda shifted to political matters, I excused myself. It was awkward, but had to be done.)

WN: Want to take a break?

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: [The 1978] constitutional convention was a very important effort [toward university autonomy]. And I'm sorry to say that the result was not what I wanted. But it was a very important effort. When we [first] mounted that effort, I think there was a general consensus that (we shouldn't) do anything. And in fact, there was some thought that it's better not to because you don't know what's going to happen (when you) open up (the question of autonomy). But the '78 convention was different in the sense that the [elected] politicians were out of it except for one or two exceptions. And it was just the people getting together. And so, I felt that that was an opportunity to strengthen the university's position as a unique institution that's very, very, very important for the state of Hawai'i. And it cannot be treated like just another state agency. So the fact that the politicians were (not) there was important because of their sense of jurisdiction, the legislators feel that they represent the people and they're responsible. They don't want to lose control because they're accountable to the people. Understandable. But they were not going to be there (so it was our opportunity. However), future legislators were there.

WN: Yeah, that's right.

(Laughter)

FM: And Tom Hamilton was a member of that convention, which was a second plus. So, with some—and I must say, I didn't consult the board on this. But I felt that the board in general was disposed more toward listening to the legislature rather than saying, "It's up to us, the board, to convince the legislature and the governor what's good for the university." They were more in the mode of saying, "What do you want us to do?" So, I made the decision that we're going to make the try. And I also knew that there could be some negative consequences, a whiplash effect. And not just from the members of the legislature because they weren't there, but the state agencies. Because the university was—and, I guess to some extent, still is—under the control of the staff agencies: B and F, personnel, attorney general, et cetera. And if you say that the university is just another state agency, their answer is, "Of course." But if you argue that the university is different, it's a public institution with a public mission, but, to perform its mission, it's got to be (independent, they would vigorously oppose us). So, anyway, we decided to give it a try.

WN: When you say "give it a try," what were some of the potential, the practical steps that needed to take place to . . .

FM: Change the constitutional language to make it very clear, without any ambiguity, that the

university is autonomous with respect to its internal operations. We're not like the City and County [of Honolulu] in the sense that we have taxing powers. So, we're not quite as independent as that, but we could certainly be more independent than the Department of Transportation or [Department of] Land and Natural Resources, or any one of the state agencies. So, that's what we were shooting for, to be able to generate resources, short of taxing powers, receiving general funds from the state, being controlled by some certain basic laws, of course, but to be able to conduct internal business of the university without (state agency) control. That was what we were shooting for.

And the language in the constitution, it's almost just one short paragraph. But we wanted to change that to make it better fit the university's goals. We accomplished that up to a point, except at the very end, I'm guessing, but through the intervention of B and F and, I think, one of the primary persons in that process was James [T.] Funaki, who was at that time [chief] house [majority] attorney. He was an expert on legislative language, so he stuck in a phrase that says "in accordance with law." So, that created an ambiguity. So, he put it right back into the legislature. The legislature decides what the degree of autonomy is for the university, instead of the constitution deciding that. I wanted the constitution to—the people to say, "Hey, the university is something special. You have to give it the kind of tools it needs to succeed."

Number one, we're an international organization in the sense we recruit our resources from all over the world. And our competition is international. The Department of Land and Natural Resources, [for example] is not in competition with other departments of land or resources out of (other) states. We are. We're in competition with Berkeley, Michigan, Harvard, Tokyo. So how can you run this university like its just another state agency? And that's the idea. And if you leave it up to the legislature (and state bureaucrats, their tendency is to say), "Why should the university be different?" (They will not willingly give up control.)

But anyway, we strengthened the language except for the fact that "in accordance with law" muddled it again. So, after we accomplished that, some people thought that we should (take some issues to court). Fight it out in court to win that battle. Well, something like that, you have to have the board's approval. And also, when you do that, you're burning bridges. The legislature still has to appropriate monies. So, we decided at the time, maybe (wrongly, we would find other means) to get it accomplished.

WN: Okay, why don't we stop here.

FM: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-26-11-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

February 13, 1997

Honolulu, O'ahu

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on February 13, 1997, and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto.

Dr. Matsuda, just while we were off tape we were talking about when you were taking office and the role of the [University of Hawai'i] Board of Regents. And you can sort of elaborate on what we were talking about earlier.

FM: Yes. We started the conversation about the governance issue when I became president. And of course, before I became president, I was vice president, so I was involved in meetings of the board and saw their actions and their deliberations. As you recall, during Harlan Cleveland's time, there was a major eruption on the campus on the issue of governance because of the [head football coach] Larry Price (chuckles) issue. So, the issue of governance was an extremely important issue at the university and for, I think, any person who would consider heading that university. So there was a great deal of faculty agitation on that issue, and properly so.

So, as I recall, in the appointment of the president, myself, at the same time, there was a declaration by the board of regents saying that they have imposed upon themselves certain rules, guidelines on proper areas of concerns and actions and procedures by the board. I was very glad that that was, on paper at least, understood and accepted by all parties.

In the actual functioning of the board, however, the board continued to get involved in and showed a great deal of interest in administrative details that I thought were inappropriate. The board had so many important issues which they addressed, but they also looked at, especially in terms of personnel appointments, in great detail at all levels of, basically, all [new] Board of Regent appointees, which are the APT [administrative, professional and technical]-type appointees, and the faculty appointees. Each person's name appeared on the board agenda for the board's approval. The board's personnel committee looked at every single name. Not, of course, with the same degree of intensity because there simply were too many.

Well, the result of that was that the board's personnel committee spent an inordinate amount of time on that particular business. But it also had the effect of requiring an unreasonable amount of time in terms of staff preparing that information and being prepared for the board

meetings.

So you might have, say, a young assistant professor that you're trying to (hire). And that young person, if he or she is able, several universities are after that person. Of course, he or she would apply to different places, so he's got a choice if he's any good. Most other places, (the department head or dean) can make the commitment that you're hired. At the University of Hawai'i, the best they could say is, "We will recommend you." And because of the heavy agenda, it took two or three months sometimes to get the approval, even though we could say or the department chair or the dean could say, "We're pretty sure it's going to go through." But you can't make that commitment. And that was a substantial disadvantage to the university.

WN: What were the reasons for this micromanagement by the Board of Regents? Was it personality of the board? Or was it how the system was actually set up? Or distrust of the president?

FM: I think it's a habit that the board got into. My understanding was that it wasn't always like that. So, I think it's a combination of those things. The composition of the board, the style of the individual board members, what they're accustomed to and are comfortable with, and perhaps the board was uncomfortable with the president, my predecessor or me. One of the indicators of a happy board is that (chuckles) they don't ask many questions. When the board gets concerned and becomes active, it's usually because they're concerned about something.

Of course, at about that time in American higher education, accountability for board members and especially public board members became a very visible issue. When you go to meetings of the American Association of Governing Boards, they're talking about (accountability), which meant they have to be more activist. They've got to get involved in the university's business and management. So, I think in terms of accountability, surely, they had to be accountable. And the passive I-vote-yes-on-every-issue kind of board is useless. So, becoming active and interested, I think, is a good idea. But that still doesn't mean that you get involved in (details). The board has a proper role. And in those areas, in the policy areas, resource-allocation areas, priority-setting areas, as well as monitoring the performance of the university, those are important issues and areas in which the board should get very active and very demanding. That is proper and I don't mind at all. But when they go in and start micromanaging the appointments and the details of transactions, then they're not a help, they're a hindrance.

MK: When it comes to issues of personnel, I think you were mentioning to us at what level the BOR should be involved. Maybe you can repeat again.

FM: Okay. My feeling was that the board certainly ought to be involved where long-term commitment of university resources is involved. For example, if the university becomes 100 percent tenured, that means we cannot renew ourselves until somebody retires. And with our age discrimination laws, you can't (set a retirement age. So it's appropriate for the board to monitor this and to ask questions.)

I think it's appropriate for the board to ask about salary levels. If a department brings in somebody and pays or proposes to pay that person (above the set range), the board should be able to ask questions. "Why do you have to do that? How good is he? What evidence do you have to show us that that person deserves that much? Why does that department need someone like that?"

But when you bring in an assistant professor who [will be] on probation for five years, we have ample time to evaluate that person. Especially if that same assistant professor, usually a recent Ph.D. graduate has applied to and is being considered by a number of (competing) institutions (a lengthy process that requires a board approval) will put the university at a severe disadvantage from a competitive point of view on an appointment that may last only a year. Five years later during consideration for promotion and tenure, then you take all the time you need 'cause that's an important decision, but at the beginning, not so. And (board scrutiny even) applied to lecturers, which are one-semester commitments. So, I thought they were indiscriminately looking at everything. I'm sure they thought they were doing a good job by that. But there were other things that I thought more important that . . .

WN: How unique was the University of Hawai'i situation in terms of the board and micromanagement and so forth? Because you said earlier that it was a national trend to show more accountability.

FM: I really don't know what the practice at other universities was. My own experience, as I indicated, really, it's been through private universities. And that [i.e., micromanagement] clearly was not the case in private universities. But having said that, I would be the first to agree that public universities are different. The board of a public university has substantially more responsibility and accountability because we spend public funds. So, I can see, like my undergraduate alma mater, we have a very large board of governors and they meet once a year. They do have an executive committee that meets more frequently, but basically, in that case, they try to hire the best president they can and let (him) run it. So, I can't answer, based on personal knowledge, but I would be surprised if other universities were like ours.

MK: I think you mentioned earlier that when you first, well, when you were vice president and Harlan Cleveland was dealing with the Larry Price situation. What's your take on that Larry Price incident?

FM: The last time we talked about the local versus nonlocal issue, I think the Larry Price case was one of those cases. There was a strong sentiment, I think, in the public—maybe not so within the university—but in the public, you know, you read in the papers that we ought to have a local head coach and Larry Price was an assistant coach at that time. I'm not much of a sports buff (chuckles), so I don't remember exactly. But I think the university, [Mānoa chancellor] Wytze Gorter, wanted to go through an orderly procedure to find a person. And the board maybe was impatient and they just went ahead and named Larry Price. [Price was appointed head football coach March 5, 1974. On May 16, 1974, the Board of Regents decided to extend Price's contract to 1979.] And the chancellor, Wytze Gorter, said that that was an intrusion of the board into his administrative responsibilities and it bypassed procedures, and so he resigned [on May 17, 1974].

I think maybe some of the board members may have not fully understood the implication of what they were doing. And all of them came from the private sector, basically. Coming from the private sector, for a board of directors to do that may be okay. But working in the university which they're not too familiar with, they may have thought that, well, football, that's not academics, right? And (chuckles) in a way, it isn't. It's a business. And so, maybe they were surprised at the reaction. If you look at their subsequent action, where they said they're not going to do that, it would imply that they said, "Oh, we shouldn't do that anymore."

WN: Also, at the time this was going on was a time when Harlan Cleveland had already announced his resignation. He was, more or less, in essence, a lame duck at that time. And Wytze Gorter was the Mānoa chancellor at that time. Wytze Gorter's name came up as a candidate for president, as well . . .

FM: Yes, of course.

WN: . . . along with you and Dick Kosaki. Do you think that had something to do with it? The fact that there really wasn't any top administrative position? [On December 6, 1973 Cleveland announced his intention to resign effective summer, 1974.]

FM: I don't think so. As a sitting president, he had announced his retirement or resignation, but he was still the president. And my recollection is that, of course, Harlan supported the chancellor. But that support, I guess at that point, didn't mean very much. If the president had not announced his resignation already and said with the chancellor, "If you do that, I'm going to resign," that would elevate the issue. But when you have a president that's already resigned, he can't resign again. So, I think Harlan was in a difficult position of trying to do something. Because the leverage that a president might have in—basically, at that point, you are taking on the board, right? But you've already played your (chuckles) trump card. So, I don't know, it was not a good situation. In the history of the university, that was not a good moment.

WN: So, try to think back, your final year as vice president. You know, you had a president who had already announced his resignation. Who, in your opinion, was in charge?

FM: Oh, at that point, clearly, the board. (Pause) Well, you know, like in any situation where the top person has announced his resignation, there is a vacuum. Nothing important normally happens. No bold new initiatives or things like that, right? And it's unfortunate that the crisis was precipitated during that interval. And maybe because we were in that state, the board did something that maybe otherwise they would not have done. And I don't think it's any secret that at that time, the board and Harlan were not getting along. So, if they had a different president, they might have talked to the president instead of taking that action. And the president might have said, "Don't do it. Let the process take its place. Maybe Larry Price is the best candidate anyway, and they don't need your help to become the head coach."

During that period, Larry Price was a defensive coordinator. And the UH was not known for its offense, but they had a good defense. So, he was a strong candidate. And I would have been surprised if any selection committee, at that point, would bring in some outsider who didn't know the local scene, who didn't know how to recruit locally, or handle the football players, [many] of whom were from Hawai'i. I don't know, this is all conjecture.

WN: I think in my reading of the situation, I think the major issue at that time was not so much Larry Price being hired but it was more the extension of his contract.

FM: Was it . . .

WN: I think they made it like a five-year contract.

FM: Oh, okay. Larry Price was already [hired] . . .

WN: He might have been. I'd have to check that. But my reading of . . .

FM: That may be. Oh, that's right. Wytze had proposed a shorter term, and then the board gave him five [years] instead.

WN: Right. Yeah. I think that's what touched off a lot of the controversy also.

FM: Okay. I forget already. As I said, it was important in the sense of defining the board's role. But I thought the problem itself. . . . As I say, but that's because I'm not a (chuckles) good sports fan.

WN: You think it's necessary now for a president to be?

FM: I think it was, probably in my time, too. And in that regard, assuming that's a proper role and responsibility for a president, you know, I didn't do a good job. I remember when the University of Hawai'i played Oklahoma [University]. And the president of Oklahoma [University] came down with his team. So, we hosted him (at a reception). And here's a team that was going to probably beat us ninety-five to zero, or something. But for him, football was a deadly serious responsibility. Well, we are all creatures of our history, and where I came from [Rose Polytechnic Institute], we didn't have any football scholarships. All the students were students first. And then there will be someone who'll say, "Who wants to turn out for football?"

(Laughter)

FM: It's like that, right? And we played on (our athletic) field. Had a lot of fun. We had a very undistinguished record (chuckles) on the gridiron, et cetera. But it was intercollegiate sports as I visioned it as it should be. So, (recruiting all) over the country to compete for the best athletes to field a team that wears our jersey but may not be ours in the sense that they came to the University of Hawai'i for (an education), which is not to say we don't—you know, I'm sure we get good students that way, also. And I think it's true that some of them get an opportunity to get an education through athletics. But this highly competitive million-dollar or multi-million-dollar business where TV contracts may be worth several million dollars, I think that's inappropriate for a university. So, I tell people, the school I went to, the head football coach was a dorm master . . .

(Laughter)

FM: . . . and in spite of his losing seasons, continuous, we couldn't fire him because we couldn't replace the dorm master. And for my graduate school, we didn't even have a football team. But anyway, I'm digressing.

WN: Sorry to get you off track. So, upon taking the job, there was a definite assurance in writing about the delineation of the role of the board.

FM: Yes. It was a public assurance. I think an assurance to the faculty and to the public. And of course, to the incoming administration. Because I think the university, through the press and otherwise, got some very bad publicity at that time. And the community was split, as I recall. Some of the people in the community saw nothing wrong with it [i.e., the board's extension of

Price's contract]. But those who understood the unique nature of the university and university governance issues saw that as a bad sign. And I think the board agreed with it, and so they made that public declaration. So I think that was a good thing.

WN: I'd like to ask you some questions about your relations with the legislature during your tenure.

FM: Mmm.

(Laughter)

FM: Good and bad. I have some very bad experiences and some good ones. Fortunately, overall, it was, I think, very good. But the bad ones are the ones that get highlighted.

WN: Well, lets go back to '74 when you took office. How were your relations with the legislature at that time?

FM: My recollection is that the legislature was very supportive. I'm convinced that the legislature as a whole, Hawai'i [State] Legislature, historically, has been very supportive of the university or maybe the concept of a university or higher education, that it's very important to the state of Hawai'i. On any given issue, any specific issue, they may be very unhappy about something or they might be too narrowly focused on something, but overall, I think, the legislature is good.

In the transportation department, I had a different relationship. Being a member of the cabinet of Jack Burns and the strong leadership role that he exerted in the legislature and my running a department of the state, required that I do things in a certain way. And many of the legislators, especially the old-timers, were good friends of mine by then. I went in not knowing anybody, but I developed a good working relationship. So, when I became the university president, many of them were still there. And I had excellent relationships with, I think, most of them.

WN: If you can just tell me, what is your utopian view of how the process should have worked, in terms of your role, the BOR's role, the legislature's role, the governor's role. How should it have been working? And then we can get into, maybe, deviations.

FM: Okay. I start with the basic concept almost by definition that the university, a public, tax-supported institution, is nevertheless different from other (state agencies) in the sense that it serves more than just a narrow state purpose. That its arena is national and international. The resources that we need are provided not just by the state, although, of course, the taxpayers play the biggest, most important role. But in some aspects, the federal government plays a bigger role. (In undergraduate education, for example), the students that we educate are not just limited to, in terms of where they come from, to the state of Hawai'i and, I think just as importantly, where they go to after they graduate is not limited to the state of Hawai'i. So the university has a much broader-based (operating base).

I can give one example. When we graduate, let's say, electronic engineers from the [University of Hawai'i] College of Engineering, people might ask, "Why do you do that for? We don't have an electronics industry here. So why do we spend state money to educate electronics engineers and then ship 'em out to California and other places?" My answer to that is that the

university's role is to develop the human resources of this state, the young men and women, and give them the kind of education that will give them the opportunity to contribute—well, to grow and profit, not just financially but professionally and as human beings—from this process. And if that takes them to California for a job or China for a job, more power to them. It is our responsibility to provide them with that kind of education. Now, clearly, we cannot afford to cover every field. So, it's most important that we provide, at the minimum, a good basic education, but in selected areas that are of interest to the people, to the young people that we're trying to educate, we ought to (strive for excellence).

So, can the Department of Budget and Finance make that same statement? Or the Department of Transportation? Most state departments are inwardly focused—how can we best serve the people who live here now? There's not going to be another—you know, the (California) State Highway Department isn't going to compete with us (to run our highways program), right? But the University of (California) will compete with the University of Hawai'i (to do oceanography research). So, we're different.

Now, how do you recognize that in what you do? You can't do that without a broadly based faculty. That's your human resource. You can't do it without the (classrooms and laboratories), but you first start with the faculty. And in order to be able to get the faculty that you need to accomplish our mission, you have to think much broader than local availability. But then how do you get the most out of that faculty? How do you manage your operation so that you can attract (faculty), attract the students, and get them to interact and teach and learn from each other? I think that is best done by a semiautonomous, if not completely autonomous university. (However, a) completely autonomous university cannot be accomplished in a state institution (supported by general tax revenues).

By its very nature, the legislature is inwardly focused. They've got to be reelected and the voters are here, not in other places. So, I think it's natural that their value system would be different (from the university's). We're thinking that young people in the next twenty, thirty, forty years of their professional lives would make an impact, most of them in our own community, but some of them in other places. If we said that we're only going to do things that can take place in Hawai'i, we would have probably concentrated on sugar, pineapple (chuckles), tourism, right?

And yet, we have educated and graduated substantial numbers of scientists and engineers who are in the technology business and who are now developing those or engaged in those businesses in other places. And if Hawai'i is ever going to be able to grow and compete in that area, it's going to require those people to come back and help us. And many of them, I'm convinced, would like to come back. We just don't have the jobs. But if we create the opportunities, then we can get them back here. Then they would participate and they would build this state in a way that we all want. But if we had not done that for all these years and all of a sudden, we want to buy that talent, you're not going to do it.

So, anyway. I guess what I started to say was that the university is different from other state agencies in mission, in concept, in the way it works. So, the governance of this enterprise has to reflect that. The constitution of the state says internal management of the university is the board's responsibility. It doesn't say the complete management, only the internal management, which implies that somebody else will define the mission. Once you define the mission for the university, then the board will implement that. Now, the board itself does define missions, in

the sense that they might say, well, health care is very important and to develop that, we need a good medical school. But the board cannot implement that vision unless the legislature agrees with it and provides funding for it. So, in terms of the broad mission of the university, that's the legislature's (responsibility, which they exercise by statute). They provide you with the funding. They say to the Board of Regents, the constitution says you're responsible for the internal management, but the legislature will allocate the resources.

There's a controversy, I think, about how some programs start in the legislature. And the university has a tendency to say, "If we didn't think of it, it's no good." I disagree with that. I think that the legislature is the appropriate body, the legislature and governor, to define the broad mission of the university. So, if we have a legislature (or governor) that lacks vision or imagination, then the university's in real trouble. But on the other hand, the university has the responsibility to educate, and to persuade the governor and the legislature and the people to say what's good for them and for the state, what kind of a university they need to get where they want to go. So, it's a two-way street.

And by the same token, when some B and F analyst tells us what (positions can be filled), that's when I say, "That is not their business. That's the university's business." B and F can decide, based on the state's economy and availability of funds, et cetera, how much money they would recommend to the governor for the university (and how effectively we are accomplishing our mission, but not interfere with the internal processes of the university).

If the legislature says the university will get \$300 million on certain economic or financial assumptions, and the governor, in executing that budget, finds that he's got to (reduce the budget), that's the governor's responsibility and prerogative. B and F (could) say, (for example), "We have this terrible problem with the education department (so) they should have a higher priority (than the university)." I think that's B and F's responsibility. But when they come in and argue position by position, "Why do you need that secretary? Prove it to me in thirteen different ways," I think that is really going much, much beyond their responsibility, and what's even worse, they're doing a lot of harm in the process. (Incidentally, things have improved greatly in recent years.)

So, anyway, what's the ideal? We have a process where the public and the legislature determine what they want their university to be. And usually, that gives you pretty lofty goals. And then the legislature decides how much resources they're going to give us to accomplish (those goals). And the governor administers that. Both the legislature and the governor would monitor the performance of the university, which is as it should be. Then the university gets the money, and at that point, the Board of Regents should take over and say, "Okay, now, it's our show. You told us what the target is, you (gave us the resources), it's up to us to get us there."

And if they disagree with the governor, then they have to convince the legislature. Because when you're talking about goals and directions, it's really the legislature that sets it. If the governor and the board disagrees as to not what, but how, then I think the university should prevail, not the governor or his staff. That's the ideal (arrangement).

WN: Shall we take a break?

FM: Sure.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

- FM: As I was saying, I think I've been consistent in this view, might be a naive point of view, but when we went to the constitutional convention back in '78, that's basically what we were trying to establish. We didn't try in the constitutional convention to say that the university is autonomous and we should run everything. We were satisfied to get the internal management of the university in our hands, fully realizing that the resources are given to us by the legislature and administered by the governor. And the person that (pays the bills) has the right to (call the shot on what the money is spent on). Basically, that, to me, means they define the mission of the university. For the university to say, "No, just give us the money and don't ask questions (about what we spend it on)," that's not possible in our system of government. So, anyway. (Chuckles)
- MK: You were mentioning earlier that you viewed the governor and the legislature as having the broad vision. They're supposed to have the broad vision of the university.
- FM: Yes. They (must consider) the needs and aspirations of the whole state. (The) university, no matter how important we think we are, is just a part of that. There are other needs, health needs, job needs, recreational needs. These are all important to the people. So, they look at the overall picture and they have to decide what is the proper role for the university. You know, in a simple question on education: What part of (the state budget) belongs to the Department of Education, and what part to the University [of Hawai'i]? How you allocate the resources, how you define the (respective) functions, that has to take place outside of the university. And that's the legislature's role.
- MK: When you look back, you look at Governor Ariyoshi, what did you think was his vision for the university?
- FM: I think the governor's vision for the university was that it should serve the state and it should be a good university. But most of my contacts with the governor at that point was budget, money. (Chuckles) Now, he may have been talking to the board members, most of whom were his appointees toward the end [of FM's term as president] about mission and things like that, which is fine. But my contacts with him primarily were in terms of budget and some of the internal procedures, internal management issues. During those years, we were facing severe budget problems, basically, crisis management.
- MK: How about the legislature? What did you see as their vision of the university?
- FM: Oh, all over the place. Each person. As I said, they have a kind of a mind-set that says the university is important. Nobody says, "Well, we don't care what you do." But within that mind-set, they focus on different things. Say, the Big Island legislators every year introduced a bill to move the College of [Tropical] Agriculture [and Human Resources] to Hilo. (Chuckles) And the neighbor island (legislators) usually were interested in their community colleges because their constituents were concerned about their kids going there and the programs. "How come Honolulu has all those programs, we don't have it?" So, they're very constituency

oriented in their concerns, which is understandable. Which left UH-Mānoa with a very severe problem because they didn't have a constituency in the sense that Kaua'i Community College had a constituency.

And especially if you're talking about programs of national interest or international importance, like [Institute for] Astronomy, for example. To say that we have the world's best site that we should protect and develop, and we have Canada, France, and England coming here, the question is, "So what? How many local kids do you have in that program."

And we say, "Not many." That Hawai'i's contribution in the field of astronomy is not reflected necessarily in jobs for local kids. The opportunity is available and, I think, more and more are getting in. But before astronomy became a nice business, let's say, on the Big Island, not many students were interested in it. And in terms of, say, jobs, (chuckles) how many astronomy jobs are there in this world, right?

The members of the legislature have very specific interests, and so Mānoa is very often represented in the legislature by the few senators and representatives that sort of live around here, whose voting constituency (chuckles) has a strong university component. Community colleges, as you know, are usually well supported (by their respective constituencies).

MK: And also, during those years, I think the money chairmen [i.e., chairmen of the Senate Ways and Means Committee and the House Finance Committee] happened to come from the neighbor islands, right?

FM: Right.

MK: [Tony] Kunimura, [Mamoru] Yamasaki, [Richard] Kawakami.

FM: Stanley [I.] Hara, at the beginning. Joe [Joseph M.] Souki, toward the end. They had a lot of control, of course, but, I think, in fairness to them, they, in my judgment, have been supportive of the university in general.

My first experience—well, I had experiences with people like Stanley Hara, let's see now, I guess maybe that was mostly transportation. Hiram Kamaka was finance chairman. Ben [Benjamin J.] Cayetano was ways and means chairman. Generally speaking, I felt that they were trying to do a good job of integrating the needs, matching the needs with the resources. And I never had the feeling that the university was targeted for cuts. When we were cut, others were suffering cuts, too. I think there was a general lack of understanding [among legislators] of how universities operated. And resulting from that, a lot of questions and unhappiness about the way we did business. But the university as an institution, in my judgment, was never under attack in the legislature.

But we've had problems with specific legislators. But that's part of the game. You try to just work with those individuals. Sometimes you fight with those individuals. And you win some, you lose some.

MK: Who would you term as the strongest supporters for the university in the legislature?

FM: You know, that needs to be defined a little bit.

WN: Who shared the outward vision of the university closest?

FM: (Pause) In the legislature, let's see. That's kind of hard to say. To me, the legislature is about seventy-six individuals. They all have their own agenda, own constituency. And I think because the university affects each one and their constituencies, put together, it comes out to be support for the university. Not necessarily in the same priority that we want. And sometimes, there were glaring . . .

(Laughter)

FM: . . . problems. I'll give you two examples: the baseball stadium [i.e., Rainbow Stadium], the best in the country, they tell me. It's not something that the university asked for or even wanted. Even then, [the expansion of] Hamilton [Library] was a higher priority, but there was no champion for it (in the legislature). But there was a champion for Les Murakami's baseball team. And the latest is, of course, the [Stan Sheriff Center]. And Hamilton [Library] was still [awaiting expansion], you know. So, there are those anomalies, let's say.

But generally speaking, the interests do coincide. Because what we're interested in, presumably for the students, and the students' interests, are conveyed to the legislators. So, we can make a match. The difficult ones, as I said, are when there is no strong student component, like astronomy didn't at one point. And agriculture now, it's dwindling now in terms of student interest. But in that case, the legislative interest also is kind of shifting from agriculture. So, things seem to work out. Not exactly the way we wanted, but generally speaking, I think the process works.

Sometimes people (go to the legislature) to achieve very narrow, almost personal things. And that's when the process gets subverted. Fortunately, that doesn't happen too often. When it does happen, it's (usually) *manini* stuff.

WN: Seems to me like the gist of the problem in terms of relationship with the legislature was not so much support for the university but the role of the university. In other words, you taking the outward role, university should be a national, international academic institution, as opposed to jobs for local people, economic development, these kind of things. Would you say that's basically the root of the problem? I mean, that means that you folks weren't always on the same page?

FM: We were in the same book, maybe different pages. (Chuckles) But I think it's undeniable that some legislators—in my mind, a small minority of legislators—tried to get personal benefit out of their legislative role. Not necessarily for them personally, but they were trying to do things for their constituents in a way that would be unfair to the rest of the people that didn't have legislative connections. But most of the legislators did not try to do that; at least, not to me. And the few who tried soon learned that it didn't do them any good. And sure, they could retaliate through the legislative process; some of them did, or tried, anyway. But the vast majority of the legislators that I've known, when they disagreed with you, it's because they believe that it's not in their constituents' best interest. And they represent their constituents. So, I have no problem with that.

And if we disagree and if we don't get what we want, I say it's not necessarily their fault. Maybe it's our fault that we weren't able to persuade them that what we are proposing is the best thing overall for the university and for the state. I don't have a negative view of the legislators in general. In specific, I've had some very bad experiences, but fortunately, with very few individuals.

MK: As president, I was wondering, how much contact did you have with legislators and to what extent did you rely on the legislative liaison from the university or other administrators who worked with the university?

FM: First, we had the problem in the university of (professors) who had some need for more money or more positions (for their program) would approach individual legislators. You know, it's such a small community. And on opening day of the legislature, the place would be crawling with university people. And throughout the session, you see university people going in and out of legislative offices and talking with staffers [and] legislators. And I thought that was really bad (for the university). And this was when we were trying to get the board to take a strong position on university priorities and budgets. If the legislators listened to these (individuals) and disregarded the concerted, organized, rational process that led to a [board of] regents' budget, (the board of regents' budget would be meaningless).

So, we tried to control that. Not so much by saying, "You can't do that." You know, it's a free society and if they're not teaching class at that moment, we can't tell them, "You can't (go to the legislature)." But what we did try to do was to indicate very clearly to the legislature that there is an official university position on every issue that affects us. And that official position will be stated by the president or his designee. And that testimony would be identified with a green cover that says, "official university testimony." Until then, you go to a hearing, there may be five (people) from the university (taking) different (positions) and you don't know which one represents the university's (position).

So, we tried to at least make it clear what the university's position was and if others come in and speak against it, propose something else, or propose something that didn't get into the [board of] regents' budget, the legislature would know that they're on their own. I think it worked. Clearly, the regents' budget worked because they're still doing it. And the regents are more assertive in that way, which is what I wanted.

And having an official university testimony was also recognized by the board. Now, as you know, there are many issues and many hearings, many of them simultaneous, so the president could not do it all by himself. And in the preparation of testimony, we, of course, have to rely on the program people. We developed a system where every bill and resolution introduced would be reviewed centrally. We had somebody assigned during the session to do that. And that person would (determine whether or not the bill or resolution affected the university).

And then, he would assign the preparation of the testimony, the official testimony, to certain individuals or departments. "Here's a bill regarding, say, oceanography. What do you think the university position ought to be?" And to prepare draft testimony. Then we look at it to see if the draft testimony reflects official university priorities and policy positions. And if not, we would edit that. The actual testimony, very often, we ask the person in charge of that program to present, but with a green cover (page over the written testimony). On major policy issues rather than program issues, I (tried to present the testimony) personally. And if I could not, I

would have an appropriate vice president do it. So that's the way we tried to cover it.

MK: And before your time, it was not as organized?

FM: It was a free-for-all. Harlan might be testifying, but so might (five) others. They know that the president is speaking for the university, but if Harlan isn't there and somebody else is speaking for Harlan, then it's anybody's guess who they're going to believe. I don't care if they disagree with us, that's fine. But they should at least know the university's position (and the green cover testimony made that clear).

So, I think it worked out okay. Among our own staff, vice presidents, deans, chancellors, people that report to me, we controlled those. But certainly at the faculty level, we (didn't attempt to) control. So, I think we presented a more coherent view of what the university's priorities and interests are. And I always tell the people that we go in on the merit. If we don't have the merit, then they don't fund it, well, we try again the next time (with a better) proposal.

But we just wanted to be careful that we don't get whipsawed into getting—as you know, sometimes the legislature will deliberately not do something because, say, the senate might say, “Well, the house wants that, so we're not going to do it. Let them beg for it and then we'll get something we want.” And they horse trade. And I tell (our folks), “I don't want any of us to get caught in that or to contribute to that. I want you to tell the same thing to both houses.” And very often, we'd give copies (to the other body). So each side would know exactly what we said to the other. It's a matter of credibility. We don't say one thing to the senate because they're favorable and something else to the house because they're unfavorable or vice versa. Whether they like it or not, we tell them the same thing. It was okay. If you try to slant your testimony so that the response is favorable, when they talk to each other, [they'd] say, “University said this to you, but that's not what they told us.” We didn't want that to happen.

WN: So, if there's a program or something that's being instituted or put in, which is contrary to the original Board of Regents' budget, what happened? Let's take the baseball stadium as an example. It wasn't part of the BOR budget, and it was, more or less, put in by the legislature. Did the money come up from another source or did they use part of the university budget?

FM: Well, the way they described it was that it's not out of the university's share, whatever that is. And that if it didn't come to the university for that purpose, it wouldn't have gone to some other university project like Hamilton [Library]. It would have gone someplace else [other than to the University of Hawai'i]. So it's not part of our budget. As I recall, we weren't given a choice in the matter when they said they're going to do it. I don't recall whether we had any testimony on that, but I'd be pretty sure if we had a chance to present testimony, we would have said no. We'd rather have it for a higher priority thing. And the guy that did it to us was my good friend [Rep.] Charlie [Charles T.] Ushijima.

(Laughter)

FM: They were raising funds for the baseball team. And, you know, I can understand that. But, say, from the institutional point of view, there are higher priorities. And I thought the [existing] baseball stadium we had was pretty good. It's a little drafty and you get wet when it rains, but,

my god, that's college baseball. Now what we have is even better than [what professional] farm teams have.

WN: Okay. Finish with this portion of it. What criteria did you use to select your legislative liaison?

FM: Well, people who understood the legislative mind and the processes. It was more important that they knew and could work with the (legislative) staff than the legislator himself or herself. Most of the direct contact with the legislators, I did. But with the staff, my staff took care of. There were people (at the university) that were more experienced than I. You know, people like, oh, Dick Kosaki is an old master working with the legislators. Very low key, but very effective. And he had credibility.

WN: Dewey Kim was at one time?

FM: Yes, Dewey. Although he didn't have the kind of credibility that, say, Dick Kosaki had. But Dewey was a good organizer. He could keep on top of things. To coordinate and to keep track of things, he was great.

Glenn Miyataki was like Dick Kosaki. He's very low key, very effective. He's a good people person, so he has excellent relationships with staff members and with legislators, also.

So I tried to look for people like that. Not necessarily people who know the subject. And also, from my point of view, people that I could trust that would not get us into trouble. They have to be able to say no to improper requests.

WN: Okay. Shall we stop here?

MK: Yeah.

FM: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape Nos. 25-27-12-97 and 25-28-12-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Honolulu, O'ahu

February 26, 1997

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on February 26, 1997, and we are at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay, we were just talking off tape before we turned on the tape about when you first became president, there were, I guess you could say, different political camps. In general, faculty were supporting [Thomas P.] Gill, and of course, [John A.] Burns was in power at that time.

FM: Well, I'm not aware that the faculty in general was supporting Gill. I know that Gill had a strong following on the campus and that was a very effective group. But my feeling also—and I don't have any real facts or information—but my feeling is that Burns also had a strong following on campus. Considering what John Burns did for the university, you've got to believe there are a lot of people who liked what he did for the university and were supportive of him.

But (chuckles) as I was saying before the tape was turned on, I guess I'm naive politically. I didn't really understand that facet of the presidential search. I really didn't think that it entered into it. I was aware that a number of people thought of me as a political person, and that was distressing to me because I'd always. . . . I guess we covered this before.

So anyway (chuckles) I've learned since, though, that the university is a very political place, both in terms of statewide elective politics as well as politics within the university. It's a very politically active and politically knowledgeable body of people. They know how politics works (chuckles) and they use their skills to get what they want. And my background really didn't prepare me for operating in that kind of environment.

WN: Interesting perspective because as you read the outside articles and maybe talk to certain people, it sort of looks the opposite. They tend to think of you as being very *akamai* politically, you know.

FM: I'm not you know. People keep thinking that and I think if anyone really researched that and talked to legislators, older—you know, the people in the political world, I think they would consider me as naive. I know [Senator] Donald Ching used to tell me (chuckles) . . .

(Laughter)

FM: (He was a good friend, but) he used to give me a bad time, "You're like a damn university professor (laughs), you don't know how the real world works," and things like that.

WN: Did you ever think of that as a compliment?

FM: Yes, I said, "Well, you know, if you want politics go talk to the governor."

(Laughter)

WN: Okay, well, today we'd like to get into talking about programs at the University of Hawai'i. What did you consider to be high priority programs with the university?

FM: Well, before we get to programs I would start first with the nature of the University of Hawai'i. It's a state university. We have definite obligations to the students and to the community. And having said that, the university as an institution has a role to play that goes beyond just the state and just the people of the state. In fact, in fulfilling that broad a role, it really does serve the people of the state and the purposes of the state. So, that's sort of the context, and then also in that context, we don't do the students or the state or the university any good by just being mediocre or worse. If you want to really serve the students and really develop the human resources within the state, not just the freshmen coming in, but the community through our outreach program, that the university if its really going to fulfill its mission it's got to strive for (quality).

So, now when we get down to programs, the programs have to fit into, say, that world view. So, my general notion about appropriate programs for the university starts out with, whatever it is, it's got to be very high quality. Something that our students will benefit from and where the value of his education, in terms of degree or (experience), would be great or greater because he received it from the University of Hawai'i. And, as we all know, (sometimes) the university was not perceived in that way—mistakenly, I think, (at home), on the Mainland, and in Asia. (It has changed, though, In some areas such as ocean sciences, Asian studies, and others, the UH is an acknowledged leader.)

So, if you want to have the University of Hawai'i to be a really excellent university in terms of programs, what are the programs that are important? Well, implied in that is that we don't have enough resources to meet all the needs out there. So we have to be (selective). And also that not all programs have to be among the best. It has to be good, but it doesn't have to be, say, comparable to the best universities public and private. But there has to be, I thought, certain programs that ought to compete at that level and for others be as good as any state university but not necessarily among the (very) best.

So, the fundamental programs are basically your undergraduate curricula in different fields, arts and sciences as the basic. Definitely we have to be a very sound university. For our graduates coming out with a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Hawai'i, the real measure of how good they are, I think, is the quality of graduate schools they get admitted to. If they cannot enroll in the best universities for their graduate program, then we haven't done our job. Not everybody can get admitted to the best universities. But our best students with the best minds, now, if we cannot train them so that they can compete with anybody else going

into the Harvards of the world, then we haven't done our job by those talented students. So, that's one measure I would apply. You know, you have to be able to measure these things, right? So where do our graduates go? (Well, they do go to the best universities in the world for graduate studies!)

Now, the other programs that I thought where the University of Hawai'i should really be among the top rank are those areas in which Hawai'i would have some natural advantage, that we ought to leverage the advantage to produce the best quality education and research, and those are fairly standard. It has to do with our geographic position, our natural resources, and our human resources. So you know, Asian studies, oceanography, astronomy, tropical agriculture. The usual group of programs that, say, (all UH) presidents (have identified). So I don't think there's anything new there. That's the way I looked at programs.

But I also felt strongly that programs have to be generated by and managed by the faculty basically. You have to remember that I was a system president. Campuses were run by chancellors and I also mentioned that I believed in a strong chancellor system. So, programs I viewed as being a campus responsibility. Now, the president clearly has a role in terms of maybe setting major directions or providing support and encouragement, resources, et cetera, to be sure that those programs can grow in the direction that he believes. But it's not the president's role to sit down and really get into the details of defining the programs or hiring faculty. It's fairly easy to say this is what we want to do, but how do you implement that? You implement that through hiring the right faculty or assigning the right faculty to the task, and that I felt was way beyond the president's *kuleana*. If you believe in the university's self-starting mode of operation and if you're going to trust your faculty, you know, it seems to me that's the way you have to operate.

So, when it came to specific programs I depended heavily on the chancellor, people who reported to me, and beyond the chancellor to the deans and the faculty. My own feeling was that the key academic officers in the university were the deans because they had the real clout. They managed the (academic) budget. They chose or approved the department chair who are, I would guess, the next most important academic administrators. And of course, the bottom line is the faculty. No matter how good these people [administrators] are, if the faculty cannot perform, then you don't have a good university. And it's (the dean's) job, really, to build up the departments and the college with the right kind of faculty and the right kind of programs.

WN: Some of the criticism that I read about the chancellor system was the appearance of duplication in terms of governance. So, in other words, you're saying that the deans were the key people because they managed the budgets and the chancellor was overseeing the deans.

FM: Yes.

WN: The chancellor would report to you.

FM: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: Okay. So was there any kind of---did you feel that there was a duplication of bureaucracy?

FM: No. I think---and we had occasions to discuss that question in many different ways. The people who generally made those kinds of statements, basically, if I analyze what they are

trying to say, wanted funding without any constraints. They wanted to do anything that they wanted to do without anybody saying yes or no to it. And that's not possible. They would give me, when we had these discussions, examples about what happens at other places and almost invariably these are private colleges, very often small colleges. It's the old (European tradition). You know, a professor is given (a chair) and then he's the king of his world. Whatever he does nobody challenges. And people that work under him, they're his slaves. You know, if you're a professor and you have an assistant, what that assistant is able to do or even the job that he gets elsewhere is determined by that professor. And we don't operate like that.

The American educational system is quite different from the European educational system. And you find that same [European] system in operation at (places like) the University of Tokyo, where the system basically takes a person and provides him with the resources. The system works in their context because that's the way it's set up to work. But the accountability that is required in the case of state universities, U.S. universities, is very different from the accountability required of those [other] kinds of universities. In the U.S. in many private colleges, the accountability is to a board of trustees, many of which just meet once a year.

And when you have a publicly funded university, and I don't mean just state, the same thing happens when we apply for federal funds for research. We don't tell the federal agencies, "Give us the money and don't ask any questions." We give detailed reports and they prescribe in detail what we need to do. Now, how we do it is up to us. But unless they accept our proposal, which means that unless they agree on what we say we want to do, they don't give us the money. So they, in fact, dictate to us what kind of research we will do, right? The accountability system in universities, certainly for state universities, it's quite different. But even private universities that use federal funds, the accountability then in that case goes to the federal government. And the researchers don't have the academic freedom, you might say. They bartered away their academic freedom to get the money, which I'm not saying that's bad. That's the system. And great research has been accomplished under that system. And in fact, people cry for more. You see when federal funds are cut back they say, "It's killing us. Give us more." But strings are attached.

Accountability in state universities, in particular, and in any system that uses public funds require that there be review and approvals. Now I would agree that we would not, we should not, and we cannot, we don't have the ability, to review every action. When we talk about duplication, what kind of duplication are people talking about? One of the major responsibilities of a system office is to understand the operation of the whole university system. And Mānoa, even though it's by far the largest and a very important part of that, it's not the whole university in spite of what the faculty at Mānoa thinks. (Chuckles) And so we need to look at how the Mānoa campus fits into the overall system. What is the best use of system resources to get the job done and how much of that resource ought to go to Mānoa for what purposes. Because clearly the community colleges provide activities (which compete for resources).

If you talk about duplication there certainly are duplications at the community college level and Mānoa level in the first two years. And of course, if you include Hilo, you know there's another—I don't call it duplication. In some cases it might be triplication. But basically the idea of redundancy. Is redundancy bad? I would say in most cases, but not in all cases. Redundancy means you've got different people trying different things, even though they may be trying to achieve the same thing, they'll be different. Clearly in the community colleges

they're working with a different clientele, using different methods, but trying to achieve the same result. And some people will say, well, that's redundant. Why don't you send them all to Mānoa because they offer the same courses? And I think they miss the point. Redundancy in a system is: one, unavoidable; and second, when the redundancy is provided for valid reasons, it's a valuable tool. But from a narrow point of view, say a (Mānoa) department might say, "Well, why do they need anybody else? They have us."

And in the decision-making process, the redundancy in the bureaucracy, the fiscal officer or administrative officer in the department can't just sign off and say, "Go do it." Somebody else reviews it and somebody else reviews it. Well, I think there was too much of that. We (should minimize or eliminate) internal redundancy but we cannot eliminate external redundancy. On personnel actions that are, say, civil service for example, at the time that I was president there was no way that we could cut out DPS [Department of Personnel Services] from the process. If you wanted to hire a secretary we had to go to them to get a list and whomever we hired, they had to review to make sure that (we followed their rules), and those things take a long time. If you add to that our internal review to be sure that they're conforming to university policy, it became onerous. And I'll be the first to say that: one, that's true; second, that's not good.

The alternative is if we said to the departments, for example, "Okay we're going to remove all redundancy. You take whatever action you want to, that you think is right—" and I don't dispute their good intentions. But they're operating in a small world with their limited view and if they went directly to DPS, and we have—I don't know how many—dozens of departments, each department dealing directly with DPS, that probably would be the worst possible outcome for the university in terms of overall university efficiency and effectiveness. 'Cause surely in that case the control will be shifted from within the university, where we try to manage ourselves, to the state agencies. It's like, take the worst case, in budget making each [university] department submitted its own budget directly to the legislature. Can you imagine the chaos that would result? The politics that would ensue as each department tries to lobby its own program, almost faculty member by faculty member. There would be total chaos. And for some people that's what they want. The university's been described in its management system as organized chaos with the key word being "chaos" not "organized."

(Laughter)

FM: Unfortunately, the kind of system that many people wanted, one, was not possible under the way the state was organized and the way the statutes were written. And secondly, it wasn't even in the university's best interest.

WN: Well, you were presiding in a time when the community colleges were really growing.

FM: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: And I know the chancellor system was implemented by Harlan Cleveland, your predecessor, probably for that reason, to give fairness to the community colleges.

FM: Yes, except that Harlan was also the president [i.e., chancellor] of Mānoa.

WN: Okay.

FM: I changed that . . .

WN: That's where you changed that.

FM: Yes, I changed that and I said I'm not going to be the president of Mānoa. I was going to really be a system president and let the campuses or academic units manage themselves (in accordance with university and state policies and procedures).

WN: Did you feel any pressure to give higher priority to Mānoa?

FM: All the time, from Mānoa. Yes. And I think this is why my decision was a correct one. If I were, at the same time the Mānoa president, no matter how objective I am with the needs of the other competing campuses, the perception will be that I am protecting my campus. I personally felt you cannot be an effective champion for the whole system if you're perceived as a champion (chuckles) for one portion of it. That's why I opted for every campus having a chancellor. Not every campus but every unit. I had Hilo as one four-year unit, Mānoa, and then the community colleges, and later on we added West O'ahu. And we would basically place our bets on finding and supporting good chancellors. That turned out to be harder to do (chuckles) than we expected, but that was the idea. Now, I guess a lot of people didn't understand that and I failed to explain or convince them that that's the system that I thought was best for the university, because we got mired in procedures and details, many of which were (externally imposed).

In fact, if I may jump ahead a little bit, when Al [Albert J.] Simone took over [as University of Hawai'i president in 1984] he decentralized the personnel system and (it was welcomed by the campuses). But the reality is we have unions to deal with. And every employee, other than the exempt administrative employees, is governed by the contract between the university and a union [University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly, Hawai'i Government Employees' Association, and United Public Workers]. What we do with one person here on one campus affects what happens everywhere else because on the other side of the fence, you might say, they have a very centralized form of administration or management, right? You're dealing with a labor union [in this case, FM is referring to the faculty union, the University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly] that insists that everybody be treated in a certain way. How can you have couple hundred departments each making individual decisions and [at the same time] dealing with the same union, let alone the university's policies? Unless we're going to say we (abolish) our policies and let the department formulate ad hoc whatever they want to do, which again, is chaos. For them it's maximum freedom. They can do whatever they want without worrying about consequences to other departments or other campuses. Even though the delegation was to deans, there are enough deans to create a situation where in a very short time (there is chaos) because each dean, in his best judgment for his college, is going to make what he thinks is the right decision. But that decision may affect other decisions by other deans or provosts. And when you're dealing with a union or when you're dealing with a state agency that sees the university as one body, then it simply doesn't work. There are some activities that have to be centralized because of the way the environment operates. (By the way, the personnel office has been recentralized under Ken Mortimer.)

To give you another example where what was at one time a centralized activity because of the environment, no longer needs to be centralized, and that's the computing system. Remember when we first got in—you guys are too young—but when we first got into computer usage, it

started off with a little computer, I think, in the math department or engineering department. We got the first 650 on campus, and my good friend Ed [Edwin H.] Mookini, was running it. It was more a departmental tool for research and teaching, but not used in the administration. But as the technology and the capabilities grew, many universities began to incorporate computers into their infrastructure. I remember when the university got its first (7000) series computer, which was then a supercomputer. It probably had less capacity than this [FM refers to his own desktop computer]. But it was a centralized piece of equipment, it was too expensive. It required a substantial professional support structure, so if you wanted to use a computer you had to go to the computing (center). It was a centralized system. And that continued for a long time and unfortunately it's still the same in the sense that there is a central computer system. However, the technology has gone way beyond that so virtually every department now has its own little computer subsystem, (or network). And what was originally a very highly centralized operation is now very decentralized, distributed, and basically the faculty members or research units or departments can devise their own computer subsystem to meet their needs. Technology has changed that.

Now technology might also change the human resources management because of the kind of software that is now available where you can impose through the software, policy constraints and reviews. Where before, human beings had to check each one, a computer can do at least the clear, clean obvious ones. But very often (there is) a little wrinkle, but (the computer can) kick out those cases where it doesn't fit and then let the human judgment take place.

But when I was president we were still in the centralized computer mode. Mānoa had the capability and none of the other campuses had. And they needed that capability just as much as Mānoa. In our budget, if you look at the central administration budget, the computer system was in there, and the management information services would provide management support for all of the campuses. Those were all centralized. And I think some of the complaints about a heavy central administration was based on (these activities). They looked at our budget and our head count and assumed they are all vice presidents, special assistants, or something (chuckles) up to no good because they were getting involved in a lot of (bureaucratic mischief). But the centralized portion of the system office was basically, some of them at least, centralized services, not centralized control. Everybody, I think, assumed that whatever we had were for control purposes. Whereas a large portion of that was for services that at that point we could not afford to decentralize. We could not say to Hilo, "Okay. Go build your own computer system, (hire staff) and here's the money. Community colleges, you do your own." So we said okay, "We're going to put our money into one centralized system. You guys tap into it for services." And of course, we could've said, "And Mānoa, you run it." Right? Except I think if that happened, Mānoa would take priority over everybody else. And if they had time and capacity available then community colleges might get some (service). And I thought that the computer system was such a vital part of not only administration, but really the educational part. We were involved in. . . . You may remember the PLATO system?

WN: Yeah. Right.

FM: We can get into this later, but—what did I call this? (Educational) Improvement Fund. I (chuckles) got into trouble, but one year I set aside \$2 million from our budget. This is when we were having terrible budget problems to the point where everybody was in the retrenchment mode. And so I said, maybe we'll survive in a retrenchment mode, but that means we're not going to move forward. The only way you can introduce change and

innovation is to provide the faculty with the means to make those changes. So I took, I think it was \$2 million (for the biennium) off the top and said this is going to be (available) on a proposal basis. If you have some innovative ideas to improve education or improve support to students, whatever, you know, no strings attached---no limits, but anything that will improve the university, submit your proposals and I'd form a committee to look at them. And this will be over and above what the department gets. I knew that if we gave the money to the departments and say, "Do it," that money (would be dissipated. The investment in the PLATO system was the direct outcome of the Educational Improvement Fund, a centralized resource management tool that I established).

The management of the university and the changes that I thought were forthcoming in terms of the importance of the computer required that we make it available to everybody and the only way to do it was through the system office. If I were doing it today I would say, "Of course not." A distributed system is just as good, if not better. And there again, we clearly have redundancy, but the redundancy is good because each person's need is different. For somebody, they need a certain type of capability, heavy on graphics [for example]. Somebody [else is] a number cruncher. You're able to get the stuff that you need at relatively low cost, but that fits your need much better than a centralized system. Anyway, that to me was one of the major issues. I failed to convince people that we had, in fact, a very lean central (administration).

Now I had, in my time, one vice president, a vice president for academic affairs, a couple of assistants (to the president), and an assistant vice president for academic planning. The human resources department was centralized and the computer section was centralized. The human resources was partially (centralized) to make sure that we were following university policies and then whenever we had a union problem we dealt with it through that centralized human resources [system]. We called it, I guess, "personnel" at that time. Oh, and we also had centralized purchasing, so we don't have all the different departments just purchasing things. They had to come through central purchasing. (Of course, the accounting system was centralized.)

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: So in essence what we're talking about is---what you're saying really is that the purpose of the central office really was to eliminate redundancy. Or eliminate the potential for redundancy.

FM: And also to allocate resources. As we said the last time, I considered that basically a responsibility of the board of regents. It's not something that the president decides. It's the board's decision. Because the way you allocate your resources really determines where the university is going. And if the board isn't involved in that, you know, we don't need them. They'd just cause humbug and, you know. (Chuckles) But the way you allocate resources to programs, of course, implies that you know the programs you want, what you were trying to achieve. Overall planning, the allocation of resources [were recommendations] the president, as a chief executive officer, had to provide to the board. And of course, the board members come from all walks of life, different ideas, different values, different knowledge bases. So their

judgment is final, but they need guidance. We need to recommend. We need to argue. We need to persuade. Sometimes they were hardheaded, they don't listen. And who knows, maybe they're right and I'm wrong. But at least there has to be a vigorous interaction that way.

That point of view may be quite different from the faculty's point of view where (chuckles) for some of them it's, you know, "You guys exist to support me. And your job is to get me my money and then get out of the way." And of course, my view is different from that. They're hired to do a job for (the university). We're not hired to do a job for them. (Ancient universities were like that—a scholars' guild would hire people to provide nonacademic support, and the scholars "owned" the university. But it doesn't work like that today.) The state of Hawai'i, the taxpayers of Hawai'i, want a university. They're paying for it but we can't do it without (the faculty). That's the first fact that everyone has to agree on. You can do without a president, (maybe), but you can't do without the faculty.

WN: Did you get a different type of feedback from, say, the community colleges or UH-Hilo? Because I would imagine that a system office would exist to try to give every unit in the system a fair shake as compared to Mānoa. So, were the reactions different?

FM: Yes. (Chuckles) Well, everyone agreed that they're not getting their fair share.

(Laughter)

FM: No matter what. "(We're not getting what we need,)" et cetera. I think the dissatisfaction was universal. But that's the nature of the process and the being. The Hilo campus felt, I think, almost perpetually they were not getting a fair shake. And that's because of their aspirations. You remember Hilo at one point was just a two-year college. And they eventually grew to a four-year college. Now they're talking about maybe adding some graduate programs, which is a natural evolution of an educational institution. So you can't blame them. But from the system point of view you have to ask, is that the best use of critical funds. And the answer may be yes in certain programs. Maybe yes today, but no twenty years ago. So there's no hard-and-fast answer that's unchanging. So as the environment changes, then your position has to change. At the time there was a very strong building program for the community colleges and we were fortunate also in having some very able academic administrators. Able, dedicated, who I think understood the importance of their mission and also understood that they had to do it with limited resources. So the chancellor understood that I held him accountable. Later, "her," when Joyce [S. Tsunoda] took over. But they were able to deal with the issues, I think, much better than the Mānoa campus and, for that matter, Hilo also.

WN: "Issues" meaning what?

FM: Basically, funding and program issues. I'll be jumping around a little bit, but we thought, one, that each campus should have what we would call today a strategic plan. And in the case of a multicampus subsystem like the community colleges, they should have a community college plan that would guide their development, which would be something that they develop internally. So we needed to have that. They were called academic plans at that time. And what I insisted on was that the academic plan be an implementable plan. It's not an ask-for-the-(moon) kind of a plan. "Our plan is for you guys to get us \$10 billion." That's not a plan, okay? But a plan is to find out what the needs are and what the opportunities are, how much it'll cost, and what are the relative merits. Tough, tough process. That's one [issue].

Another one is periodic program evaluations. Once we approve a program, every few years you call it up again to see how you're doing. Are you achieving your objectives or have your objectives changed? Part of that is done through the accreditation process by outsiders. But we also felt that for some of these, especially when they're new, a periodic review would be necessary. But once they get well established and probably not getting very much scrutiny from the outside, then as an exercise that's valuable to the faculty and to the program administration to see how they're doing.

And finally the most controversial one was posttenure review, [for] the individual. So those are, I thought, issues that are important in the process of self-renewal. The Japanese word for that is *kaizen*, renewal or improvement. It's accepted (everywhere), but (chuckles) maybe not in the university. The university, which professes to be the agent of change in our society, is the most (chuckles)—in some cases, not all maybe, but in many, many cases—the most difficult to change, the most entrenched.

So, anyway, these are, I thought, changes that needed to be woven into the fabric of what a university is. Otherwise, something that's started maybe seventy-five years ago which was great at that time but may today be irrelevant, would continue on. So the community colleges I thought did a good job with that. But maybe in fairness to Mānoa, it [i.e., community colleges] was new yet. It may be a natural process for them. Mānoa, on the other hand, was much more defensive about that process. I guess they felt that they were vulnerable if that kind of [review] process is applied.

So we asked, of course, all the campuses to develop a master plan, academic plan, and to make priority determinations, and to come up with implementable plans, and to be able to make some choices. Not necessarily to get rid of weak programs because if there was a program that was weak but was central to the mission of the campus, then you have to put resources in it to make it strong. But if it's (marginal) then you might turn it off. Even a good program, if it's irrelevant to this university, you might turn it off. And of course, faced with that potential I can see why people would be wary and not give you that (chuckles) whole story, right? That's human nature and I can understand that. And I can understand the department-level people or the faculty feeling that way. But I could not accept or tolerate a chancellor not doing that. That's why he's there. He's not there for a popularity contest. And I think part of Durwood's [Long] problems was he was trying to do that. And the community college chancellors who did do that were usually in trouble with their constituents. Because it's not an easy thing to do.

Well, out of Mānoa I never did get a credible academic plan. There was a lot of good stuff in it. But when we asked for priorities, they said, "Everything is important, everything depends on everything else." There was nothing in there that they could say is not as important (as some others). And that was not an acceptable answer. So it was sent back (to be) reworked. But they could never bite the bullet. I expected that from the faculty. It's their livelihood. It's their career. I can understand that. But we have well-paid administrators to (make the difficult judgments). I was never interested in firing people because my premise going in was that we have good people. And if we had to phase out (a program because institutional needs changed), we would find a way to do it so that nobody loses a job. It may stretch it out more than we would want to, but we could at least set the direction. And that most of them, unless he really just refuses to do it, can go into other fields. If he is smart enough to get a Ph.D., he's smart enough (chuckles) to get retrained if he has the motivation. But if the motivation is

just to protect what he has regardless of what is happening in the world around him, then that's not going to work. So my big disappointment and I would say my big failure was the inability to get Mānoa to examine itself in the context of the world as it existed then and as it exists today. (Maybe it just takes time.)

WN: Did Mānoa ever come back to you and say, "Well, why don't you do it?"

FM: Not directly, but I think there was an attempt to pass it to me. My answer to that would be, "Then if that's the case, Mister Chancellor, if I have to do your job, I don't need you."

WN: Well, your successor Al Simone, in essence, went back to the Harlan Cleveland days in keeping the chancellor system except for Mānoa and he became the executive officer for Mānoa, [a system] which exists today. So, your ten years was sort of a—you know, in terms of a Mānoa chancellor—was sort of an aberration?

FM: Perhaps, yes. Before I left the office, because of the criticism that that system was receiving, I reviewed the system to see whether or not in fact the criticism was well founded, whether changes ought to be made. And I did consider at that time, going back to Harlan's system [where the UH president also serves as UH-Mānoa chancellor]. I felt that because Mānoa was such a problem, it needed intervention. The chancellor that I had in there, you might say, who had the guts to do it (chuckles) got into trouble, but for other reasons. You know, with Durwood [Long], he and I never disagreed on the academic values and goals. It's really the means that we disagreed on.

I came to the same conclusion, though, that if I became the chancellor of Mānoa, the job is too big because the chancellor of the campus has a much more hands-on responsibility in the affairs of the campus. And being president of the system was a full-time job as it was. So one or the other will suffer. And my feeling was—I'm sort of reconstructing this because I don't really recall it—but the nature of management is such that you go from crisis to crisis. If you have a crisis today and you have a long-range plan that you're working on, you don't say, "Well, the crisis has to wait, I'm going to think about the next ten years." You drop that, you attend to the crisis. So, in effect, if you're [both] the president of the system and chancellor of Mānoa, instead of being 100 percent president and looking at the long-term future, you're going to be a day-to-day manager of a very large, very important, very difficult campus. And I didn't think that that was good for the university, long-term. And yet it was important that the person responsible for the management of that campus be more directly responsible to the president. What I suggested to the board was that—and this may be cosmetic but I didn't think so—but change the title from chancellor, which by concept and by title implies a person who has full responsibility for that activity, to executive vice president. That means he's my vice president and his job is to manage that campus, but he's answerable to me. The way it was the other way, some of these chancellors felt that they were answerable to their campus. They would do whatever the campus wants rather than what the president and the board were directing him to do to implement board policy or university goals. So I thought that change might accomplish it, but I don't think there's an easy answer.

So part of my answer was, if the system worked with the community colleges—because it did—why wouldn't it work with the Mānoa campus? It's not necessarily that the system was bad. Maybe we have the wrong people in there. And of course that's my responsibility because I put them there. I don't disclaim the responsibility in any way. I certainly (believe) that in

Durwood Long's case. I view that not only as Durwood's failure. It's my failure as well, not recognizing that Durwood was going to be like that. When I hired Durwood I called for some references and I was getting some advice saying that you don't want to touch that guy because he's too controversial. But what swung me was that this respected member of the Board [of Regents] of the University of California, said that Durwood is very good, but the only thing is that he's got a prickly character, if you can work [with] that. And at that time, he (was to) be my academic vice president [for] policy issues, which he's very good at. So I thought I can work with him. Because my staff is small, we'll learn to accommodate each other, (and we did). But Durwood, placed in a large organization with executive rather than staff responsibilities was a different story. Well, where are we?

WN: Well, we started off this entire interview talking about programs. I think we eventually have gotten to that because I guess we had to clear up some things about governance and so forth. One of the first program issues that faced you when you took office was the East-West Center, its eventual leaving of [i.e., separation from] the university and its incorporation. Were you instrumental in that?

FM: I think so. In fact I had to fight against what I considered great odds to get that done because the faculty was against it, the board [of regents] was against it, the legislature was against it. But I thought that it was for the good of the East-West Center, because the East-West Center is a federal institution established under federal statute. The university had a responsibility to perform in the East-West Center's best interest. We were doing our job. We could do our job better that way. But secondly, it would also be beneficial to the university (in the long run). Most people disagreed with that.

The way it came about is that when I was vice president for business affairs, the university was having problems of long standing way before I got there with the [U.S.] Department of State on the accounting system (for the East-West Center contract). The East-West Center was following the university's accounting system, which was not responsive to the Department of State's needs to account for their expenditure of funds. It's the same problem that we would have, say, with any federal contract. If we just gave them our regular accounting report to them they'd say, "What's this?" They want to be able to interpret these numbers in terms of the contract that they entered into with the University of Hawai'i. I inherited that problem and we were trying to negotiate a system of accounting reports which would meet our needs and meet the needs of the U.S. Information Agency, the agency within the Department of State (that we dealt with). And it was kind of a messy thing. I'm not an accountant. (Chuckles) I'm not too enamored of that. But it's something we had to do.

Now, during that time also as VP [vice president] I would attend board meetings. (The agenda had) university matters and a separate part that referred to the East-West Center. The board was so involved with university matters, naturally, (that many times they could not act on the EWC agenda items). They were getting involved in a lot of administrative details (for the university) that they didn't have to. Not that they didn't have to, they shouldn't. But more often than not, an important East-West Center agenda item, they wouldn't get to. After Ets [Everett] Kleinjans, the chancellor [of East-West Center], sat around waiting for his agenda item to come up, they'd say, "Meeting adjourned. Sorry, Chancellor. We'll take it up the next time." And the other thing that impressed me was that Ets Kleinjans used to complain, "You know, the East-West Center lives in the worst of two worlds: the state university world and the federal world." Because whatever is the strictest (rule) applied to them. If the federal rules

permitted certain things but the state rules didn't, then (the state rules prevailed. Or vice versa). He has much less flexibility to get the job accomplished.

When I was involved in trying to solve this accounting problem I told Harlan, "You know, the problem is not accounting. The problem really is that under the current university system, we cannot do a good job. Now, if the university could administer that contract without unnecessary limitations, then we can do a good job and East-West Center (can perform)." But the way it is, we can't change the state system because our accounting system was (designed to meet state requirements).

Oh, and one other thing. Because the board, being a local board primarily interested in and responsible for the University of Hawai'i, the point of view was very parochial. Understandable. That's their job. At least many of them felt that it was. East-West Center policy decisions were, I think, being considered primarily in terms of how [the East-West Center] would benefit Hawai'i. But it was a national institution, paid for by the taxpayers of the U.S. Putting all this together, and I guess by the time I reached this decision Harlan was gone, that the only answer that made sense, a very radical one, is to (spin) off the East-West Center. I looked at the federal statute. The federal statute didn't have to be changed to accomplish that. The secretary of state would have to contract with somebody else, which he had the ability to do. The question, of course, is if the University of Hawai'i is not going to (be the contractor), who's going to do it? Because of the state's substantial contribution to the East-West Center in terms of buildings and (land), I felt that the state had to retain some control. Not absolute control, but some influence on what happens with the center. And likewise, the federal government would have to retain significant influence on what happens. After all, they're providing the bulk of the operating funds.

And thirdly, if you look at the mission of the East-West Center, the University of Hawai'i or the state of Hawai'i and the federal government are getting together to decide what's best for Asia. That's colonialism. (Chuckles) Right? "We're going to tell you guys what's good for you and we're going to teach you how," et cetera. When it [East-West Center] was started, I think that was the point of view. But again, the world is changing. So I felt that if the East-West Center is really going to achieve its broad (international) mission, but still be a national institution, we had to bring in foreigners, Asians, Pacific Islanders. There's no way that you could add those people to the [University of Hawai'i] Board of Regents. Right? And so I said, well, we ought to form a separate corporation and in the charter of corporation, provide for non-American members [on a board of governors]. Now how do you provide that without getting into the politics of who's going to appoint whom? I said what we'll do is we'll let the governor of Hawai'i appoint five people to the [East-West Center] Board [of Governors] and so the state's interest will be expressed through those five appointees. Five from the rest of America, (appointed by) the secretary of state on the federal side, representing the federal interests in the center. And those ten elect five more from Asia-Pacific. And of course, these people would or the countries would recommend (candidates). These people themselves—I mean the federal and state (board members)—are the result of a political process and politics are involved, but it is at least once removed. And that way we could get representation on the board of the countries with which we will be working, the federal interest, and the state interest.

WN: This is the [East-West Center] Board of Governors . . .

FM: Board of governors. Yes.

WN: Which is the situation we have today.

FM: Yes. And so I said the solution to the problem that we were having was not to monkey around with the accounting system because that's just a symptom of two systems colliding. Why don't we remove it and reform it? I first broached that idea, after I thought it through, with the Board of Regents. I think the first time I discussed it nobody liked it. (Chuckles) They were looking at it as a big fat contract. I don't know how, but I was able to persuade them that this was, in fact, in the long term good for Hawai'i, for the university, and clearly good for the East-West Center. But their question was, "Well, what about us?" Because the university had a substantial investment in terms of people [and] hours spent building that institution. Very legitimate question. My answer to that was, to have a weak emasculated East-West Center on our campus is not going to help us. If anything, it'll drag us down. If the center is perceived as ineffective, lousy scholarship, or whatever, it's no credit to the University of Hawai'i. And you might know that the East-West Center was not the invention of some bureaucrat in the Department of State. It was Jack Burns and some university people thinking that it was a good idea. So it was sort of rammed down their [i.e., Department of State's] throat. So the typical bureaucratic reaction, in that case is, it wasn't our idea and so we don't like it. There was not only a lack of support, there was active opposition in the early years (from the Department of State). It really was, I thought, headed for disaster. And so I was able to persuade the board [of regents] members, enough of them, anyway, that to have a strong effective East-West Center right next door to us, with which we have strong institutional ties, would be an asset to the university. Having a failing East-West Center is not an asset.

Then with their approval, we introduced a bill to accomplish this. And during that process, of course, we had meetings with [University of Hawai'i] faculty and (staff). And they were almost uniformly opposed to it. Again, self-interest, which is understandable. Many of them had spent a large part of their career at the university building the East-West Center, (and they felt the center belonged to them). To now have it taken away would be a tough thing to swallow. And I understood that. But I tried to tell them, giving them the same story, that their contribution to the center would go down the drain if the center fails. But their contribution would have a long-term, positive effect if the center succeeds.

The important institutional relationship between the center and the university were twofold. One, was that university faculty [who] worked on the East-West Center contract were university employees. Their faculty status would be affected if we separate them (from the university). The answer to that was joint appointments. But it didn't solve all the problems because they would have to choose one or the other [as] a home base. So that was a problem. And the second important interface was the graduate students that the East-West Center was sending to the University of Hawai'i. And I think for most of the faculty that was a bigger problem because they were concerned that if the center separated they might lose that source of graduate students, and for some of them that was their main source of graduate students for their program. If they lost the graduate students, (their programs would suffer). Many of the students are given research assignments in the professor's field of interest, so [the graduate students] are a real (asset) to the department and the professor. In our agreement with the Department of State we (kept the number of students), and we insisted that the (student grantee) program not be damaged by this change.

I'm not sure that I really convinced the faculty or certainly I know I didn't convince some of them. And when we went to the legislature with our proposal. . . . Oh, before we went to the legislature we had to negotiate with the Department of State. What can we work out? We had very tough negotiations because there were buildings involved, there were programs involved, there were people involved. And the final solution [was that] the state had to build some (replacement) buildings because (we were using buildings) built with federal funds, et cetera. Very complex negotiations. But we didn't want to go to the legislature with those questions unanswered. First we had to work out the deal with the Department of State. And then when we thought that we had a good solution, we could go to the legislature with a united front, the East-West Center itself, the Department of State, (the university and the state administration). At that time John Richardson was the assistant secretary [of state]. He got involved in these negotiations. They had one guy that was assigned to it that did most of the detail negotiations for their side. And of course, George Ariyoshi, who was at the time. . . . Was he acting governor or was he governor?

WN: Yeah. [Nineteen] seventy-four? Yeah, [acting governor].

FM: Acting governor. He got involved in it (and provided support, direction, and approval as we progressed). We used to go to Washington, [D.C.] and they'd come over [to Hawai'i], and we'd haggle over things and break up, and then meet again. The typical negotiation. But finally we were able to come to a basic agreement. Then we went to the legislature (to establish an independent nonprofit organization to take over the East-West Center). It (took two legislative sessions). Very difficult hearings because faculty [members] were there to oppose it, and the Department of State people were (not welcomed with open arms). We had to carry the ball. Of course it was our proposal so. . . . But anyway, after some difficulty, we were able to get it passed. If it were just a reorganization, it might have been easy, but it meant the state had to spend money to build buildings. And so there was a question of fairness. Is it fair for us to get these old buildings and build something else (for the feds)? The new Burns Hall was built as part of that deal. And we got (to own) Kennedy Theatre (and two classroom buildings). On the federal side, they were very reluctant to give up Kennedy Theatre . . .

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 25-28-12-97; SIDE ONE

WN: Interview [tape] number two with Dr. Fujio Matsuda on February 26, 1997.

FM: Everything considered, it was worth the effort. The East-West Center, by virtue of that arrangement, was able to get a number of very prominent, influential board members. From the U.S. side, Senator [J. William] Fulbright was one of the first board members and you couldn't have gotten him as part of the University of Hawai'i. (Herbert C. Cornuelle was on the founding board.) And we had the founder of Sony Corporation, (Masaru Ibuka), from Japan, the president of the University of the Philippines, (Dr. Onofre Corpuz, and Prime Minister Ratu Mara from Fiji). I thought (it was an outstanding board). And also because of the way we constituted the board, we were sending a message to Asia that, "Now this organization is not just a U.S. organization. You are part of the EWC." (The unspoken hope

was that other countries would) provide some financial support also. Without that, there was no way that we could get any. . . . We might get small sums, but no real contributions. We're still not very far, but I think now the Japanese government this year has gone up to \$450,000 for the East-West Center, which is still a drop in the bucket. But I think the potential for building it is there. And only incidentally, if the East-West Center was still part of the University [of Hawai'i] and was required to go through the kind of (federal) budget cuts it is going through now, and if the state with its budget problem had to deal with the center, I would think the center would collapse. It was, I think, one of my better decisions. The jury is still out, however.

(Laughter)

FM: But I don't have reason to regret that decision. Although I've got to tell you, both Al [Albert J.] Simone and Ken [Kenneth P.] Mortimer, I think, disagree with that because I've heard both of them say [that] the university should have kept the East-West Center. Well, they're entitled to their own opinion. But . . .

WN: So your decision really entailed less state commitment, less state funding than if it were part of the university.

FM: Well, the state had no commitment for the operating funds. The state's contribution was land, basically, to the original deal, (which the state will get back if the center ever goes out of business).

WN: All right. It's about eleven o'clock. We stop here? Or should we . . .

FM: We can go for another half an hour or so.

MK: Okay.

WN: (Laughs) If it's okay with you. I was thinking about some other programs at Mānoa. The ones that come to mind is the marine programs. What you wanted to do was, in essence, consolidate many of the programs.

FM: Not really. I wanted to emphasize the marine programs and allocate resources to it. But not so much to consolidate because, again, I felt that it was at the campus level of activity. That if the campus could get more done or improve the quality by appropriate combinations, I would certainly encourage that, but it was not a decision that I would make. I didn't go in and say, "Okay you guys, do this or do that."

WN: I guess that was the Durwood Long/John Craven controversy.

FM: Yeah, but then Durwood was a chancellor . . .

WN: Right.

FM: . . . of the campus and he certainly wasn't acting under my direction. Although what he wanted to accomplish would eventually come to me and to the board for approval. He wasn't acting under my direction to accomplish specific (reorganizations).

WN: Yeah, I know it's probably difficult for us to refer to certain programs, but were there programs that you had to really ponder in terms of keeping, or reallocating, or. . . .

FM: Yes. In fact, one of them led to a sit-in because through our program reviews, we were concerned about New College. Basically the program was under scrutiny because there were a number of people at the campus level who felt that was a "Mickey Mouse" program. It started out in the Vietnam days when (students were given, and faculty took a lot of liberty with courses). The review (was done at the) campus level, but the recommendation finally came up to me. That was the program where the students decided what they wanted, sort of prescribed the course content, and then they decided what grade each one should have. I mean the person himself says, "I deserve an A" and then he gets an A. (Chuckles) And for some reason the more conventional faculty thought that that wasn't a very good idea. But anyway, quite aside from the grading system, the substance, the quality of the program was under scrutiny. We finally came to the conclusion that the program, for a number of reasons, including declining interest, should be terminated. And, of course, naturally, the proponents, the kids that were in the program agitated against that.

Shutting down a program is never easy, but from time to time it's something that you have to do. Usually it's not that drastic. If there's a program that's weak, you get them to strengthen it. Ethnic Studies was one such program. We felt that the program was weak. The value or the importance of the program wasn't questioned. And some people misread our intentions. They thought that we were attacking it, ethnic studies, as a concept. But especially in our kind of society, Hawai'i, the ethnic history, the culture, how these different groups of immigrants work within themselves and with each other—those programs were not considered unimportant. Well, not by me anyway. There were some people who look at the very traditional academic disciplines and say, "That's not a discipline." And the answer is, of course it's not. Not at that time, but that's not a good enough reason to extinguish that program. And, in fact, what they needed to do was strengthen it to provide it with academic substance, and quality, and respectability. They ought to be able to find somebody who can take the leadership and build a program that has academic respectability, is a good scholar, who specializes in this area. And the answer, as it finally turned out, was Franklin [S.] Odo. He was brought in from [California State University-Long Beach]. If [for example] you're doing oral history and (innovative stuff), I can see why you bring in (unorthodox) people but the leadership has to be provided by someone who understands academic quality. And I think Franklin was. . . . I was comfortable with the idea that he could do it and I hoped that he could do it. So they were on probation for a while, but I was very happy when they worked themselves out of it.

You go through some of those things and, you know, you learn a lot in the process. It's not a matter of my just giving out judgments because I start off with, by my own admission, I don't know enough about (fields other than my own). I need to listen to the experts. But I have some sense of quality of the people and I rely on peer judgment. I won't try to make a decision myself whether Franklin is any good or not, but I like to find out from other people that he worked with at [California State University-Long Beach] and professional societies. How do they view Franklin Odo? And if the evidence shows that he's done respectable work, et cetera, then good. If evidence shows he hasn't done anything, then no matter how good he or somebody else may say he is, there's a big question mark. Those are program issues that are difficult. I don't blame the chancellors, when they have to deal more directly with faculty and students on these issues, but that's what they get paid to do.

WN: Okay. Another function of the system office, I would imagine, would be fund-raising. The University of Hawai'i Foundation . . .

FM: Yes.

WN: . . . coordinating things. So how has that changed in your tenure as president?

FM: When I became president, the foundation, of course, already existed and it was constituted of a number of very good friends of the university, well-meaning people. They really loved the university. They wanted to help the university. But in terms of raising large sums of money for the university, they were not very effective because that wasn't where they had their experience or the contacts. We had an assistant to the president, Fred [Frederick Y.] Smith, who was Harlan's assistant and who played the role of press secretary, dealing with the media and stuff like that. He was the part-time head of the foundation. Every once in a while the board would meet and they'd talk about (fund-raising). But relatively speaking, small amounts of money, (although much appreciated). And it was, I would say, almost like a club. A group of good friends among themselves and of the university, trying to do something to help the university. And it was a very warm, close group.

When I became president, I thought that the problem with that was not (only) the amount of money that was raised, but it was a small group close to the university and that we were not reaching out into the community. And especially, we were not reaching out into the business community. Now, of course, those are related because if you get the business community involved, you can get more money. Well, I think there were equal considerations. The University of Hawai'i, because it depended so heavily on state appropriations, looked only to the state. I thought that was a major problem with the lack of support for the university because we didn't engage the business community.

So we reconstituted that board and we brought in a number of outsiders, people who are known in the community who are able to raise money. And the one that helped us at that stage the most was Manny [Man Kwong] Au. Manny Au is a real estate developer, well known. And what he did was, he approached a couple of the local foundations and asked them to pay for a full-time fund-raiser to become the executive director or secretary of the University of Hawai'i Foundation for two years, and promised the foundations that we're not going to come back for any more money, that in those two years we're going to establish the organization and contacts and raise money so that we'll get enough money to pay for this guy after the second year. And then he went out and got for us Don . . .

WN: Mair.

FM: Don [Donald C.] Mair. Right. Don Mair was with Hawaiian Trust [Company, Ltd.] at that time. He had a lot of good contacts, local, among the foundations and businesses because that was his business. Don Mair came on board. And at that time, we formed the President's Club to try to get individuals to contribute \$1,000 a year, which is not very much maybe, but it's a good start. And I was involved in a special effort. I said we (need) to get money from the Big Five [i.e., Alexander and Baldwin, Inc.; American Factors, Inc.; C. Brewer & Co., Ltd.; Castle & Cooke, Inc.; Theo H. Davies & Co., Ltd.] We could go to all these other businesses and get money, but in those days the Big Five was a very significant economic force in Hawai'i. And I happened to be on the board of C. Brewer [& Co., Ltd.] at that time. And the head [i.e.,

president and chief executive officer] of C. Brewer was a guy named Murray [E.] Stewart. I asked him to call a meeting of the heads of the Big Five organizations. Of course, if I called (chuckles) I wouldn't be able to do it. They'd find some excuse and maybe send—they'll probably send somebody but maybe second, third level. But when the head of C. Brewer, one of their own, asks them to attend a meeting, they would come. We had a meeting at the O'ahu Country Club. And I told them that I was coming to them for two reasons: to get their involvement in the University of Hawai'i, to learn about the university, and to get their support in many different ways; but second to raise some money. And I wanted an endowment from them to fund a professorship. The first meeting that I had was cordial, not enthusiastic.

(Laughter)

FM: And then I made individual calls later. And I remember one of them basically said, "Why should I give you guys money?" He said, "One, the company pays enough taxes, and you get tax money. Second, the tax money you do get you waste."

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "Well, you know, who needs a medical school? Why don't you send the kids away?"

So I explained to him that we have, (first), very bright kids. Because we don't have a medical school in Hawai'i, they have to go to the Mainland. But guess what? When you apply to a Mainland state university, they take care of their own first. So our kids who are completely able are not able to get in and most of them can't afford private medical schools. So this is their only hope. Anyway, I guess, maybe I changed his mind because that company ended up coming into this program. But they all said they can't afford to give up front a big block of money to establish an endowment, but what they will do is pledge to provide an annual contribution, each company, of \$50,000. So, \$250,000 (annually) for five years. That was like a kick start and I think that was really the first time that these companies invested in the University of Hawai'i. And the President's Club was a separate effort. That's more individual membership, not company membership.

WN: Was all this in reaction to state resources going down?

FM: Partly, but not totally. The main idea was that a state university, any state university, cannot depend fully on state resources. That if you look at any great state university, it's got much more than just lots of money from the state. They have a strong alumni. They have strong business support and strong support from outside of the state. If the University of Hawai'i just kept looking at the legislature for money, it's not going to get very far. Besides with (chuckles) money from the legislature comes strings. The more independent we can get, the better off we would be. Not just because it raises money, but it gives us degrees of freedom that we lack. So we are able to do things with private funds that we cannot do with public funds. I thought that was not a short-term response to a budget problem. It's a long-term strategic move. I'm glad to say from that relatively modest start to today, I think the UH Foundation is a significant force in the future of this university.

WN: Okay. Why don't we stop here.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-29-13-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Honolulu, O'ahu

March 4, 1997

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on March 4, 1997 and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay, we just finished last time talking about the UH Foundation and fund-raising and so forth. What I wanted to do is get into the area of organized research and talk a little bit about HNEI [Hawai'i Natural Energy Institute], PICHTR [Pacific International Center for High Technology Research], and so forth and so on. First of all, what was your philosophy behind organized research as it applies to economic development for the state?

FM: Well, first of all, organized research at the university can be considered, and is, a high technology business. It of course involves mostly basic science, but in the process you do hire a lot of scientists, engineers, technologists to get the job done. It creates a lot of jobs, brings in a lot of money, several hundred million dollars (annually), you know. So, it is a major technology resource in the state. So that's, I think, the first thing.

As a university, of course, we're interested primarily in basic research. So, we do things that may not have direct application in terms of economic development, but on the other hand, it is primarily supported by federal and other funds that have a broader purpose and broader mission. So, in that respect, it fulfills a broader mission, not just a state-focused mission. It is a very important adjunct to a university. It provides a lot of research and training opportunities for our graduate students. If we didn't have that organized research program, we wouldn't have the kind of graduate studies programs that we have at the university.

For example, the Institute for Astronomy, if the study of astronomy was purely (theoretical), without the telescopes, it would be a very small program. In fact, astronomy for a long time was just a part of physics, a small part of the broader field of physics. But when we got into the experimental side, that is, the telescope program, then it blossomed into a full-fledged research institute and became international and one of the best in the world. So organized research is a vital part of the university.

WN: What was the state of the Institute for Astronomy when you took office?

FM: It was just beginning to be built. I was involved in it when I was in the Department of Transportation, because the initial effort to build the institute, at least the observatory, started with a question of where should we build a road to get to the mountaintop [i.e., Mauna Kea]

(that got me) involved in the Hilo-Kona battle. So that was, I think, in the early [19]70s, late [19]60s sort of time frame. So it was just getting started. When I got involved (at the university), I think the Canada-France telescope, which was the first major telescope, was already underway in terms of a project. The telescope wasn't built yet.

One of the early involvements that I had, as a university president, was to sit on a joint committee that involved University of Hawai'i, Canada, and France, and on many occasions, the British telescope people too. They were involved in some of our discussions about the development of the mountaintop. And I remember going to France, where their telescope was being built. They had a mock-up—well, I shouldn't say a mock-up, the real thing. But they were going to assemble it there completely, make sure that it works, and then disassemble, (ship) it to Hawai'i, and erect it on the top of Mauna Kea. All of that took place while I was president.

So I learned to work with foreign scientists and governments. (I went) to France and visited one of the key bureaucrats that was involved in the telescope project from the government side, not the scientific side, (as well as the astronomers). And same thing with our British colleagues, primarily with their equivalent of our National Science Foundation that provided the funding, and the chief person for the British telescope. I learned not only about astronomy, which is not my field, of course, but how foreign governments operate and how they were organized to fund research and how richly funded they were.

(Laughter)

WN: What was the goal of organized research? Was it to be self-sustaining?

FM: Not really, in the sense that the university provides major infrastructure in their regular university laboratories. And the university funds the basic faculty that provide the core of the scientists that work on these projects, who write the proposals (and act as the principal investigators). And until they get a project funded through the National Science Foundation, or the Department of Energy, or whatever, the university is providing them with the facilities and the salary and other duties. So I don't think we can claim that self-sufficiency is the goal. But, through the efforts of these faculty, scientists on the university payroll, they're able to get grants and contracts, and using funds from those contracts and grants, they're able to hire additional people to get the work done. And so to that extent, a project is self-supporting once you get the contract, but there's a lot of university investment, you might say, up to that point. The university has to provide the basic capability in terms of people and in terms of facilities before they can even get the contract. No, it was never intended to be self-supporting, but it does provide very valuable additional income, additional jobs, and additional opportunities, for the students as well as the faculty.

WN: You presided over a very difficult time at the university in terms of dwindling budget allocations and so forth. Did you look at organized research as something that you had to prioritize in terms of certain units and their contributions to economic development for the state? For example, PICHTR, and Hawai'i Natural Energy Institute as a way to generate income, and jobs, and alternate sources of energy for the state?

FM: Yes. In the case of HNEI and PICHTR certainly we're more on the technology application side. You know, things like astronomy, (laughs) you're looking for universal truths right? But in the case of HNEI, yes, we're talking about being able to use the. . . .

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

FM: HNEI [founded in 1974] was intended, I think by the founders, who were as far as I know, Pat [Patrick K.] Takahashi—Dr. Takahashi—and his group, who wanted to take advantage of the availability of the deep ocean at Keāhole for ocean-related research, and I think, more specifically, energy-related research. I guess the purpose, you might say, was twofold: one is basic scientific engineering research on the system. But in the case of HNEI, there was a more direct interest in the application and economic development using this technology first to benefit Hawai'i, and then, more generally, the Pacific Basin, or I should say the countries that are in the tropical zone where this kind of solar energy is available. If you look at the band within the tropic and semitropic zone of the Earth, there are areas with deep water, and therefore cold water, coupled with warm surface water which is what's needed to make the OTEC system work and so they're looking for applications there. I would say technologically HNEI, or the OTEC project, has been very successful. In fact, we were able to demonstrate that a system like that can be built and operated, even though there are people both on the U.S. side and on the Japanese side and I guess maybe worldwide who were very skeptical that the system would work. Theoretically yes, but practically many thought that the engineering problems could not be surmounted, too many uncertainties to make it work.

PICHTR [1983] was formed after HNEI [1974], and as you know, PICHTR was suggested by [U.S.] Senator [Spark M.] Matsunaga initially. And Dr. Takahashi used to work for Senator Matsunaga in Washington. He took a leave of absence from the university, went to Washington [1979-82], and worked in Senator Matsunaga's office on the science and technology area as his congressional staff member. So I think, without taking any credit away from Senator Matsunaga, who was a visionary in many respects, I think Pat Takahashi probably had a lot of input into the idea that the senator presented in a speech to the American Society of Civil Engineers, I think it was, proposing that an organization like PICHTR be built or be formed in Hawai'i to do technology-based research in cooperation with the Japanese government or Japanese scientists and engineers. So PICHTR, from the beginning, was more applications oriented, and not basic science. Whereas HNEI was more basic science and the technology needed to make that science work. So you might say, if you look at the whole spectrum of technology, from the very basic sciences for which there may be absolutely no practical implications to the other end of the spectrum, where the basic purpose is to find an application that's commercially successful . . .

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: Okay, we were talking about your comparing HNEI with PICHTR and one being more basic-type research and the other being applied research for maybe commercial purposes. Where do you stand on this in terms of what should be higher priority as far as organized research is concerned?

FM: Organized research is definitely on the scientific side. You know, we have very talented, skilled scientists and the basic activity of scientists is to find out how nature works. And universities are one of few institutions that are structured to do that—you hire a faculty member and you tell them go discover or create knowledge. And universities last a long time. You know, companies can go broke (laughs) trying to make money. But universities last—in fact, universities last longer than governments. So tying the basic task of developing, discovering knowledge, and assigning that task to universities, I think, really makes sense. You can't assign it to a company that has to have a bottom line. Organized research by its nature

does have a more narrow focus on research and results. But the other part of a university's research, which is, you might say, the departmental, some people call disorganized (laughs) research, is where a scholar or scientist basically does research on whatever interests him. You find that perhaps more in (the humanities and social sciences), as well as in basic physical and (biological sciences). So they're looking at how nature, or how the universe works, with total disregard as to how much, you know, what are the economic implications. So that end of it definitely belongs to the university. If the university starts saying, "Well, we won't do it unless there's money at the end of it," then the whole purpose of a university would be lost.

WN: Did you have difficulty justifying this to legislators? For example, the university has two major functions: one is the taxpayer-supported state university focusing on a good undergraduate education; on the other end is an organized research, high technology, economic development side. Was there a problem?

FM: Yes, there's usually a problem in state universities. You know, the taxpayers want to get their money's worth. And for many legislators—and you still hear that the (only) purpose of a university is to teach, so their kids can go to college and get a degree and get a job. A very practical orientation, and I can understand that, but the university is more than that. A university—seeking knowledge or truth, or creating knowledge, in fact, is, to me, a major function of a university. Without that, it would not be a university.

And so that's what we sort of lump into this one word: research. Research is the process of seeking knowledge, discovering knowledge, and in some respects creating knowledge. Maybe knowledge was there all the time (laughs), but you synthesize knowledge. So, some members of the public—taxpaying public—as well as the political segment of our community may not fully appreciate that. And (chuckles) you hear it all the time, if a faculty member is not in the classroom teaching, he's not working. And whenever I encounter that, I will disagree with that person. They don't always listen. (Laughs)

WN: Well, you and I can sit here and sort of agree as to the essence of a state university, and when you're creating knowledge you use that knowledge in the classrooms, and so it becomes a cyclical thing. But, I'm just wondering if many people really understood that. You're saying no, there are some segments who didn't understand that.

FM: Yes, but on the other hand, I think there is a significant segment that does. I think there is an almost universal expectation, or demand even, that the University of Hawai'i be a good university, a leading university. People use all kinds of different words to mean the same thing. They want the University of Hawai'i to be known as a university of excellence. And I think everyone understands that that doesn't mean teaching undergraduate classes. I mean having a good strong undergraduate curriculum, dedicated professors, et cetera, that's (a prerequisite), you can't do without it. But that's not all of it, and I think most people understand that.

WN: It seems to be like, for example, if you look at undergraduate education, teaching role of a university, it seems like community colleges—the growth of a community college—was the symbol of that perspective of what a university system should be doing for its taxpaying public.

FM: Yes.

WN: What segment did you feel the most comfortable in justifying to the public? For example, you have a philosophy department, where you can have a philosophy department anywhere in the United States or in the world, and somebody graduating out of philosophy is not going to be that employable as opposed to someone, say, in engineering. What did you feel most comfortable with?

FM: I would say I was---well, education is not a comfortable business (laughs). "Comfortable" may not be the right word. The most meaningful part of a university. . . . I guess no matter which phrase I think about can be characterized by the word "quality." Whatever we do has to be high quality. And in some respects, it doesn't matter so much what you do, I mean obviously any university or any educational system has limitations on what you can do. But whatever you do, to do it at a level of quality where, whether it's research or teaching or interacting with the community, being a community resource, et cetera, you have people that really are respected in their professions, who know their business, who are keeping up with what's happening, who are actually in the forefront of developing information in that field or profession or scientific discipline. I think that's the most important consideration.

Now, having said that, if we're faced with a question of another community college campus where the need is great versus, say, the Department of Philosophy at Mānoa where the number of students is small and we say, "What good is philosophy anyway?" there I would say that there are certain fields of knowledge which are basic to our civilization, and that philosophy is certainly one of them. You can't build a civilization that has no philosophic basis. So to the extent that we're trying to educate young people to understand their society, there are certain things that they have to learn or they have to be exposed to. So, those areas that are generally considered liberal arts, I think, are a core of a university, and it's also a core of community colleges. So community colleges have to have philosophy departments or courses or professors.

We don't need some of the things that are taught because those are, you might say, courses that one can be exposed to (through) thoughts or ideas or (experience) from outside of the university. The university portion should be on the core of intellectual disciplines that prepares you for the rest of it. And in that respect I guess we do a lot of things that, if you have to cut back, then you start trimming at the edges, not at the center, (and the liberal arts is the core of a university).

WN: Did you have to ever make a decision as to giving more resources to one program as opposed to another? Did the situation get to that point . . .

FM: Oh yes, definitely. We weren't successful (laughs) necessarily in accomplishing that, because as I tried to explain the last time, my basic management philosophy, you might say, of a university—or university governance philosophy—was that the basic programmatic or curricula decisions have to be made at the campus level. We can provide broad directions, but we would not, say, eliminate this (course) or change this curriculum. But what we tried to say was that there are certain areas that were important (to the mission of each) campus. In the case of Mānoa, what is central to Mānoa's mission? And what are the frills? People would disagree with what's central to Mānoa's mission. To me, athletics, that's frills. But, to some people, athletics is what binds the community to the campus and therefore it's one of the "untouchables."

(Laughter)

FM: And I may disagree with that. And I'd probably lose on that issue. So, if we start again with the basic premise that what you want for the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is excellence, then the question is what can we be excellent at? And we identify certain areas, again, this is not new with me, we all sort of come to the same conclusion. But, unsaid in that is that there is an underlying core that has to be there first before you can build on it. And the underlying core is what we call the liberal arts core.

I guess some people, when you say "liberal arts core," they're thinking of literature, and philosophy, and things like that. To me, a liberal core also includes the sciences and mathematics. In this day and age, you cannot be a liberally educated person who doesn't understand the scientific basis for the world and the mathematical tools that are needed to understand nature. So, the study of nature, which includes mathematics and the sciences and the study of man and society, that, to me, is the liberal arts. Just studying man (and society) to me, you're studying only half the world.

WN: Were you in discussions like that, where you had to, in essence defend the role of mathematics and sciences within the liberal arts core?

FM: There weren't too many occasions, although I've had occasions to express that view because I take issue with people who seem to think that liberal arts means literature. (Chuckles) And that's certainly part of it, that's the human side of it. But, no, I don't remember really having a forum where I expressed these ideas. In smaller groups, and in private, of course I would.

One of the ironies, to me, of liberal education, is we all profess—what our job is as a faculty of a university is to produce a liberally educated person who knows all kinds of stuff. And how do we teach them? We get specialists who know only a narrow portion of that to teach them. And how can a person who knows nothing about literature educate a person who is a well-rounded, liberally educated person? If we really believe that (students) ought to be liberally educated, then the professors at the university, themselves, ought to be liberally educated to teach and to help young people become liberally educated. And we have a few people like that at the university who are scientists and poets at the same time, or who are, I guess, we like to call him, a Renaissance man. He's well read and understands many different fields and can relate one to the other. But those kinds of people are rare. Most of us are narrow (specialists) narrowly educated, and then we go around spouting off and saying "What we need are liberally educated persons, and I'm going to help do that, but I myself am not."

(Laughter)

FM: Well, I wonder whether the young student, who thinks about it, has said, "Does that make sense? Here's a guy telling me I should be liberally educated, but he's not." It's like a parent saying (to a child), "Don't smoke, it's bad," (as he lights up a cigarette). So, I think there's a credibility problem in education in the U.S.

(Laughter)

FM: But, I think most of us won't admit that.

WN: How far do you look at the university as a sum of many parts? And a liberally educated person will get exposure from all of these narrow-minded (laughs), or narrowly focused people, to come up with a broadly focused mind?

FM: Yes, except can narrowly focused persons really provide, or even help provide, a liberal education? I think philosophically that's an incompatible system. (You get a compartmentalized view of the world, not an integrated whole which to me represents liberal education.) The idea and the reality are different.

WN: (Laughs) You should write a book on that subject.

(Laughter)

WN: It'd probably be about twenty chapters long.

I want to move on to the third component, I guess, of the University of Hawai'i, and that is professional programs, law school, medical school, graduate schools in terms of, again, professional education after the BA [bachelor of arts], to be employable. I know you told me earlier that the law school [William S. Richardson School of Law] and medical school [John A. Burns School of Medicine] were more or less established before you arrived, but what is your philosophy on those professional schools?

FM: Professional schools, to me, are clearly programs that are provided with an economic—well, not just economic, but say, practical benefits to the community in mind, to provide a resource to the community. Meaning, having professors in the law school or medical school who are experts and to whom the practitioner can turn for specialized assistance, which would then raise the general level of the profession. And for the students, opportunities to get into professions that they like, in which they can make a career. So, professional schools have, I think, very definite practical orientation. To me, the objective is to meet the professional needs of that society.

Now, I think in the old days the mobility of people was fairly limited, so you just worked where you lived, then the professional school had a very narrow geographic area of interest. So in the case of Hawai'i, you would say well, if we need lawyers, we build a law school. But now, with the mobility where people who go to school here can work someplace else, I think we need to consider not so much just the needs of the community, but the opportunity, the needs of the students. So if a student is interested in getting into the, say, field of chemical engineering, we don't have any chemical (industry) here. Or electronics, we don't have (many) electronics-type jobs here. You go to Silicon Valley or Dallas, Texas, or someplace like that. So if you say, "Well, why do we have to have an electronics engineering department, because we don't have any such industry," then I think we miss the point because our obligation as a university is to provide the education that would develop our people, and not necessarily in Hawai'i. So if you can take some people with great talent and potential, and provide them with the education so that they can go to Silicon Valley and contribute to not only Silicon Valley and that company, but to the United States, to Hawai'i, and to the world in the kind of work they do, I think that's an important function that the university plays; that we're not so local in our focus that we don't consider anything else. And I'm sure there are people that disagree with me because we talk about brain-drains, which is exactly what I talked about right now—take some capable people and we train them so that they find good jobs (elsewhere). Well, I don't see anything wrong with that. If I were a taxpaying parent, and I have a daughter who wants to get into a field, and this university trains her so she can go to New York and establish herself, I would say, as a taxpayer, I got my money's worth out of this university. There's nothing wrong with it.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

- WN: Taking that philosophy then, where do you place something like the law school that was established mainly because—contrary to what, in essence, you were saying—to keep people here, or people who cannot afford to go away to the Mainland to get a comparable professional education?
- FM: Well, it's not contradictory. The law school, it's true, was established for that purpose, but what you also need to consider is that the lawyers provided by the University of Hawai'i law school is a small part of a total number of lawyers that work here. I think it would be terrible, in fact, if all the lawyers that work in Hawai'i are just trained by the University of Hawai'i law school. It would be inbred and we would probably be vulnerable to professional atrophy. But because we have students from Hawai'i that go to all kinds of law schools, best in the country, and students who come over here and go to a pretty good law school here, that mix, I think, is healthy for the community. It does provide opportunities for kids who, otherwise, cannot go. So, I think, the law school is a good thing. But if it were the only law school, I would say, we may want to do part of that, but I would also then propose a good strong scholarship program which would take our kids and send them away to other law schools.
- WN: The WICHE [Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education] program, does that also include law—professional schools too?
- FM: Yes. The problem was, at the time that the [UH] law school was started, universities throughout the U.S. were enjoying boom years. Qualified students, who, if they were accepted by a WICHE school, would (pay the in-state) tuition so there was no economic penalty, at least tuitionwise, going away to school. So, in that respect, it was easier for them. But the problem was, when you applied as an out-of-state student, your priority was low. An in-state student would be accepted first and a highly qualified out-of-state student may not get in. And in fact, that was the case. Many students who are very able, capable, could not get into law schools, or could not get into medical schools because each state was taking care of its own first. Of course, I wasn't involved in it at the time that these were conceived and started, but I had no disagreements or no reservations about it. So, when I came in [as UH president], I supported it. And if there were any weaknesses, I never entertained the thought that maybe we should shut it off. In fact, my reaction was, well, we have to make it stronger because they're needed.
- WN: Was there more political baggage associated with these professional schools?
- FM: Yes. Especially the medical school because it's so expensive, and in such a high demand. And I guess the law school, which is not as expensive, but certainly in high demand. And [there were] people who tried to get their kids, or cousins, or grandchildren, or whatever into the school. Starting with my predecessors basically, we were very sensitive to the idea that the university had to be absolutely fair in their selection process. The process was very carefully developed to assure fair consideration by involving students, the professions, the community, and the faculty [involved in the admissions process], so you have different points of view being expressed in selecting from among, you might say, equally qualified candidates. Say if

you have a hundred good candidates, and you're going to pick twenty, depending on how you constitute that selection committee, you get different (groups) being selected. There may be a few that appear on any list, but on the other hand, there may be others that will appear on different lists depending on who does the selection. And you can't avoid that. So the only thing you could really assure is the process. And what you could not tolerate is an intrusion into the process, where somebody (in authority says you must admit some specific student).

WN: So at that point, what is the president's role? To formulate the policy?

FM: Not to really sit down and write the policy, but to assure himself, and the community, that such a policy is in place and is working. I guess you have protection in the numbers and the diversity of the group. If there was a deliberate attempt by any member of such a committee to distort the process (it wouldn't work). But one person might be convinced that this is the best candidate and would push that person. Somebody else may be convinced that somebody else is the best candidate and would push that. So each person, in his own judgment, would do that. But let's say somebody says, "I'm going to push him," but if he's not as good as the others, (it would be obvious) there is something wrong here. This guy—that candidate—is clearly not among the best twenty, but why is that guy pushing so hard for him? So, I think, the process may not be perfect, but it generally works.

So if somebody comes in with a personal agenda to take care of somebody in that process, I don't think it can work if the person is unqualified, or not as qualified as the others. But if the person is well qualified, then I don't see how you can detect anything like that. You cannot have an absolute system that everybody agrees on. Like, say, typically there is an essay portion and an interview portion. Well, different people will react differently to essays and to the interview process, so there are no absolutes here. If we say everybody goes through an interview, everybody has to write an essay, and the essay is reviewed by at least three members of a committee—whatever the process is—they all follow the same process, then I think we've done the best we can.

WN: When you took office, favoritism was a problem?

FM: There were always allegations that, well, so-and-so got into the law school because of (connections or pressure). I was never asked—I'm trying to recall—I can't remember any case where anyone (applied pressure or even hinted at it).

But when people (call to ask) could I help? I would say, "Well, you know, there's a process, and they have to go through the process. There's no way to intervene in that process."

And sometimes they would say, "My son didn't get in, (can you help?)"

And I would say, "Well, maybe he or she needs to improve in certain areas and take another test." So the best I could do for anyone was to try to help that student (by suggesting that he talk to the admissions committee for suggestions on where he might improve).

And I think students are entitled to that kind of assistance. If the student says, "I wasn't selected, but I don't know why," (he should be able to find out). Because if, for example, the student wasn't selected because he had no experience in the health field—if he wants to be a doctor—and there are other students who have done volunteer work at the hospitals or clinics and they've been working in the health profession, and even though his grades were just as

good as theirs, they got selected and he didn't, but he didn't know why, then (the admissions person) should be able to counsel that student and say, "The other students worked for three years in the hospitals, during the summer, while you were out surfing." And (the student can say), "Well, okay, if my grades are good, my chances will be better if (I did volunteer) work at Queen's Hospital (instead of surfing)." Things like that, I don't think is being unfair.

So that kind of help I personally cannot give, but I would call the medical school, for example, and say, "If this student came to ask you how he could improve his chances, would you talk to him?"

They say, "Sure."

But if a parent says they want to go [talk to the medical school staff], I say, "No, no. They will talk to the student, but not to the parents." So, I'm sure—from the complaints that we get—that there must have been some (perceived) activity that might have been hard to explain, but I don't know of any overt cases where somebody was ordered to take somebody, and they complied. But who knows, it's a large university.

(Laughter)

FM: There are a lot of things that happen that I don't know about.

(Laughter)

WN: You probably just saw the tip. (Laughs)

FM: Perhaps. And as I've said, I'm kind of naive, so I believe in the principle and hope that the principle applies.

WN: Okay, at this time I'd like to get into the subject of athletics—your favorite subject.

FM: Yes, okay.

WN: And I was just wondering, what did you see your role, as president, in athletics at the University of Hawai'i?

FM: Well, I guess I was confused at first, because I got involved in the basketball coach fiasco. Did we have an athletic director at that time? Or did we also lose the athletic director?

WN: Paul Durham was there at one time [Durham announced his resignation May 6, 1975. Ray Nagel was hired June 11, 1976].

FM: Yes, and when I say I was confused, if I were doing it today, I wouldn't handle it. I would tell the chancellor at Mānoa, "You handle it, that's your job." But, in any case, I guess shows my inexperience—but what happened is when that thing came out in the papers, the press calls you, the board of regents members call me. And I appointed a committee to look into the matter. I guess if I were to do it today, I would call up the chancellor and say, "Mr. Chancellor, what are you going to do about it? It's your campus, and your program. And I want a report from you." So he goes to investigate. But ah. (Chuckles) As I say, I didn't know any better, so what I was looking for was a solution to the problem even though maybe I

shouldn't have been doing it. So I appointed that committee, that committee made recommendations. I hired a deputy attorney general, or had a (special) deputy attorney general appointed, to assist the university in dealing with the NCAA [National Collegiate Athletic Association] to solve the problem. I went to UCLA [University of California, Los Angeles] to talk to Johnny Wooden, who is a very famous, and respected, coach, about helping to find a replacement for us. I even asked him if he would come to the university on a temporary basis to participate in the program because by then, he had retired. In retrospect, I should have been asking myself, "What am I doing here?"

(Laughter)

FM: For two reasons: one is that that was clearly a campus problem, not a system problem, but also because, as I said, I had no prior experience in athletics, and not much interest in the program.

WN: Why did you get involved then?

FM: I don't know, I guess I felt that I had to. Inexperience.

WN: Well, it seems like you have a pretty good handle on other aspects of the university, in what the chancellor should've been doing, what the president should've been doing, seems like now . . .

FM: But you see maybe partly as---we are all creatures of our experience, or history. At the DOT [Department of Transportation] anything in the department, if anything goes wrong, I get the call and I have to answer it. I can't say, "Oh, that's a highways division [problem], go talk to the highways chief." Because all those guys report to me, and I'm responsible. If they make the mistake, I take the heat. And maybe I was just operating in that mental mode, because this was right after I took over as president. Now I know better.

(Laughter)

FM: Twenty years later, or twenty-five years later, I know better.

WN: Well, in essence, you did have people there, in place, to handle it, and one was the chancellor. And I guess of course the other would be the athletic director.

FM: Yes. The athletic director, I couldn't—not that I had anything against the athletic director as such, but it was his responsibility to control it, and he didn't. But to skip over the chancellor and for me to get involved in it, I think was wrong. So, if I were to do it today, I'd call the chancellor and say I want a report on my desk. So, I learned a lesson.

WN: Why not—maybe to refresh your memory a little bit—my knowledge of the Bruce O'Neil incident stemmed around a [television] commercial involving some of the players—that's one aspect of it . . .

FM: Yes. But, the NCAA allegation went beyond that. So finally they had things like, certain members of our community being forced to disassociate with the university program—including one very prominent Board of Regent member. So, it was a serious problem from the community's point of view, because athletics is so important to the community. And, of course, the (press) was having a field day. The hypocrisy of the

newspapers got me. They criticize the university about the (overemphasis) on athletics. And I guess part of that is deserved. At the same time, they have three sportswriters on their staff talking about University [of Hawai'i] sports, and how many academic reporters do (they) have? (Just one reporter) who covered the university. But for sports, they (assigned) three, four guys covering all aspects of university sports. And they have the gall to say, "How come the university is putting so much emphasis on sports?" Well, you never can win—another lesson I've learned—you never can win in an argument with the newspapers, they always have the last word. But, they're hypocritical. They're out to sell newspapers, that's the only way I can rationalize it.

WN: I guess, I always look at athletics as being sort of separated from the university—a separate issue—because people that athletics draw are those that really, beyond maybe having a son or daughter or granddaughter here, going to Mānoa, really doesn't have that kind of identification with the academic part. But sports, there's no professional team, for example, here.

FM: Athletics has some benefits. One, of course, is that the student-athletes who come to the University of Hawai'i on an athletic scholarship—who play basketball or football or whatever—at least for some of them, it's a legitimate way for them to come to a university and get an education, and go on with their lives in whatever profession that they choose, outside of professional sports. And clearly for those people, the experience is a good one. So there's that benefit. But [on the other hand], those students who come just to play in the sports, who after they finish, maybe don't even graduate—although I think our graduation percentage [of athletes] is fairly good compared to other universities—who are not good enough to get into professional sports, end up as human beings that are not able to contribute and benefit from our society. To the extent that the university is involved in producing that kind of people, I think that's inexcusable.

We're not in the entertainment business. And intercollegiate athletics—the way it's done now—is entertainment. There are big bucks involved. And I think that it's immoral in the sense that we "pay" these kids, we give them free tuition, and we give them a living allowance, and they entertain us for four years. Maybe they're sitting on the bench for two years, or three, but they're in this entertainment program. And in some of the programs, they're generating millions of dollars for the university—maybe not our university, but say, Notre Dame, or Michigan, some of these big schools. It's big bucks for them. And after they leave, (the athletes) see no benefit from them. And sure, if they're like Joe Montana that was a great stepping-stone, but for the guy who doesn't make it—and there are more of them than the Joe Montanas of this world—the university has done a miserable job in (preparing them for life).

So, I think there are two answers to that: one is the kind of answer that I was familiar with in going to schools where they don't give athletic scholarships and the games are basically, truly, intercollegiate. You played on your college field, where the audience is primarily students. You're not playing for a large, vast TV audience or people who are interested in sports and not so much in the university. To me, that's the best answer. There's no money in it, but to me, for university athletics that's the best answer. Or the other answer is: if you're going to hire these (athletes) to come play for you and entertain you, you ought to pay them. Treat them as professionals. And sure, they'll go to school too, but if they're a good football player in the college ranks, pay them whatever they're worth. (Laughs) And at least in that way, the students get back benefit. But I think the first approach is possible because there are universities that do that. The second one I'm. . . .

(Laughter)

FM: I'd probably be run out of town by other university presidents for suggesting that.

WN: Well, you told me that you had to go to Kansas for the NCAA headquarters or something.

FM: Oh, that's in the Bruce O'Neil thing.

WN: Yes, the Bruce O'Neil thing.

FM: You know, the NCAA is a watchdog, and I guess it's needed. But, you know, the pressure on coaches is certainly unhealthy. The whole idea of sportsmanship, teamwork, playing fair, all those things go out the window. The only way you get measured is won-loss record.

WN: Was it your decision to terminate Coach O'Neil?

FM: No. Let's see, how---let me think about that answer. Yes, I guess it was. Let's see, Bruce---was he, did he become assistant athletic director?

WN: You mean after that? [O'Neil was named assistant athletic director in March, 1976. Two months later, in May, 1976, O'Neil was placed on administrative leave from his duties as assistant athletic director and men's head basketball coach amid charges of NCAA violations.]

FM: Yes. He wasn't fired.

WN: Okay, I'll go back and check. [O'Neil's Board of Regents-approved administrative leave was a controversial issue and led to further NCAA investigations. O'Neil never returned to the University of Hawai'i as an employee.]

FM: Yes, would you check that? Because that's the impression that I have. All coaches at the university belong to the APT [Administrative, Professional, and Technical] class, and they're represented by a union. And I think, as I recall, what happened to Bruce O'Neil was the result of negotiations with the union [Hawai'i Government Employees Association]. And to that extent yes, I was involved.

WN: Was it difficult for you? Difficult time in your presidency?

FM: That particular incident, yes. (Laughs) I was totally unprepared for it. So the only thought I had was that I needed to restore the credibility of the [athletic] program, make sure that we follow the rules, and to find somebody who will get us there. And that's why I went to John Wooden because I thought, it's a long shot but if he would agree---because he had retired already---if he would agree to come to us and help us, it'd be instant credibility.

WN: What did he say?

FM: He said no because he has too many commitments that he can't renege on. He had all kinds of clinics and he still had his office at UCLA. So, it was an interesting---let me put it this way, it was a learning experience. But fortunately I didn't have to use what I learned there again.

(Laughter)

WN: Well, that means you probably did do things right from that point. I mean, you inherited the Bruce O'Neil situation and in your ten years, it seems, or so, things stabilized.

FM: Yes, but we talk about Bruce O'Neil and what he did, or didn't do, but I think I've since found out that our situation was by no means unique. And that's what's wrong about college or university sports. It's really hypocritical. You're saying that these guys are amateurs, and so they got to behave in a certain way, when all the measures that (count) are the nonamateur ones. And then you penalize the student-athletes who are young and maybe need some discipline. You penalize the coach who is bombarded with pressures from alumni, newspapers, agents, whatever. So the system is rotten, and the Bruce O'Neils of the world are the victims. So if I become president of the university again I will abolish athletics the next day.

(Laughter)

WN: And you'll be strung up on a pole.

(Laughter)

FM: Right. But I really should've known better. Meaning that I should've said, "Hey, I don't know anything about this so I'm gonna get somebody who does to handle it." But it was almost a knee-jerk reaction. "I'm the president. I'm responsible, so I'm going to get involved in it."

WN: I would imagine you probably were getting advice from all sectors of the community on this issue.

FM: Yes and no. People who didn't know very much about the situation would make suggestions. So my approach was, if the complaint or judgments would be made by NCAA, I'll go there [to NCAA headquarters in Kansas] and find out what I need to do. It was kind of naive because they turned me down.

(Laughter)

WN: You told me they were pretty cold fish over there.

FM: Oh yeah, they didn't trust me at all.

WN: So you went with the sincere intentions of finding out what needs to be done from them, and they looked at you as. . . .

FM: They thought I was trying to compromise them in some way, get them involved, and co-op them so that they go easy on us or something. I went also to see the president of NCAA, who was a faculty member of (Michigan State University). There's a faculty representative from each university to NCAA, and the president of NCAA (is elected by the members). So I went to Michigan State, talked to him about what kind of advice he can give me. I said, "I'm a brand-new president, I don't know anything about this, it's a big scandal, how should we. . . ." I went to see him after we went to NCAA, and I told him, "These guys won't give us the time of day, what can I do about it? Can you help?" And basically he said no. And not that he was unwilling, he just, I guess, didn't know how to help. I think a year or two (later) Michigan State was under (NCAA) sanction.

(Laughter)

FM: But I felt—and maybe this was partly being defensive—but I felt that they were picking on the University of Hawai'i, because we were kind of small, way out there. That they treated the University of Hawai'i differently from the way they would treat, say, a Michigan State—a big powerful school in NCAA. But that may be sour grapes, I don't know.

WN: So we're not in that situation where we're judging whether or not Bruce O'Neil was right or wrong or in violation or not?

FM: Yes, well, violations took place. I think that much is clear. As to who's culpable, I don't think we can say it's just Bruce O'Neil.

WN: Okay, I just want to leave this session with this final question: I know it's difficult after talking like this—but what did you enjoy about athletics? What were the high points of athletics while you were president?

FM: I guess I enjoyed it as a spectator. You know, you root for your team to win. I attended some of the meetings of the university presidents' group of the Western Athletic Conference and talked about athletics. But the thing that I can say I enjoyed are the games themselves. And I guess I felt good when we won, and felt badly when we lost. Just like any other fan.

WN: Well, that's the essence of sport though.

FM: Yes. What would distress me is when, say, when our team loses, and if we're taking a beating, half the stadium leaves—or more (laughs)—and so I thought, "Gee, that's terrible. Here, these kids out there, they're playing their heart out, and we're abandoning them." And what's worse, sometimes they get booed. You asked me what I enjoy. Well, I enjoy the games that we won maybe, but also there are a lot of parts of it that I thought was shameful. But, you know, many of the spectators at the university sporting events are not university people.

WN: Okay, shall we stop here?

FM: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-30-14-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Honolulu, O'ahu

April 30, 1997

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on April 30, 1997 and we're at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay, Dr. Matsuda, let's begin another session. I'd like to start with College Hill. If you can just tell me what was it like living on College Hill?

FM: It was a little awkward, because it's, of course, the official residence, which meant that a fair number of university affairs—say, as contrasted to family affairs—took place in that home. So basically the first floor was an extension of my office. So all the private, or family, things took place on the second floor. And even though the house looks very big, if you look at just the second floor, (chuckles) it was a little crowded. And then, as now, we [i.e., the university] were having all kinds of budget problems. So there were things [i.e., improvements] that we really needed to do, but we didn't do because I felt that making me and my family comfortable was not as important as meeting the university's needs. So we basically didn't do anything to the house, which by then had been [unrepaired for] a number of years. I think my predecessor, Harlan Cleveland, also felt that he wanted to do something but in their case they just had Mrs. Cleveland and himself, so they could get by. I had a large family so. . . . But it was okay. I would say though that we were glad when my term was finally up to go back in to our own family home, which we had in Nu'uānu. Be totally private, because we have a very close family, we like to do things as a family. We had a maid at one point (at College Hill), and when she retired we never replaced—I'm sorry, yeah, we did have a (replacement) but then she took ill and then we never replaced her. You know, we all pitched in to do family things. So to be able to go back to your completely private existence was really very nice.

WN: Where did the maid live?

FM: She commuted, both of them. The first person, I think, came with the house. She was serving the previous owner, the Athertons. And then the university presidents who were basically transients, [came] and (lived in) her house. (Laughs) She took very good care of her house but she was getting little elderly, and fixed in her ways. Very hardworking, very trustworthy, but she sort of wanted things done in a certain way, which is okay. She was a nice person. A little grouchy at times. (WN laughs.) But basically very well meaning, very protective of the house. We could understand that.

WN: I remember Harlan Cleveland and Lois [Cleveland] telling me that she didn't like Harlan coming home late all the time for dinner.

(Laughter)

FM: Yes, and of course she had to then clean up and then go home after that. So you can understand that. But you have to keep that sort of thing in (perspective). My schedule also was very irregular. I think every university president can't go by the books there. But my wife would (tell her that she didn't have to wait till I came home). In fact, my wife liked to cook so I think there may have been a little bit of contention over who runs the kitchen.

(Laughter)

FM: And we survived all of that.

WN: So, in essence, the maid I guess came with the house and came with the territory.

FM: Yes. She was a Japanese lady, and when she left we had a nice Chinese lady. But after a relatively short while she was ill with cancer so she had to quit work.

WN: How did your children adjust?

FM: I think they felt a little constrained also. They couldn't cut up and, you know, they were teenagers—some of them beyond the teens—but they were all going to school, they had their things to do. I think the best part for them, and their friends, was that they could use our parking lot and (walk) to school.

(Laughter)

FM: So we tell them, during the day, when there's no function, it's okay, but if we had a luncheon or something they can't park there.

WN: Did you have a lot of functions then? Important functions?

FM: A fair number, some breakfasts, some lunches, some dinners, (receptions). Or sometimes just when you wanted to have a special meeting where you thought the *lānai* of College Hill was more congenial than the office, then we would arrange to have a meeting there or serve coffee and doughnuts while you talk. Things like that. It was very nice in that respect.

WN: Did you have an easy enough time adjusting to having to mix work with entertaining with home life? Was it a difficult mix in the beginning?

FM: It was a little awkward because---of course, when I was in the transportation [department] all of those things took place away from the home; I didn't bring business to my home. But here you couldn't avoid that. But you adjust. Even then, I think, I probably didn't use College Hill as much as, say, Al Simone did. Al Simone used it all the time, which is good. You know, that's what it was for. Maybe I was a little more selective in how I used it. But it's a real asset to the university and so I tried to take care of it.

WN: Was it a requirement that you live there?

FM: I'm not sure. I suppose if I insisted that I live in my own home and use College Hill just as an extension of my office, I guess I could've done that. I felt that because of the very long and irregular hours that I kept, living at College Hill overall was better. And people sort of expected that, too. At one point when we had the issue of [establishing] a faculty club on Mānoa, and we were looking at various possibilities, we did briefly consider the possibility of using College Hill as a faculty club—you know, beautiful setting—except it was much too small. A typical faculty club would have a fairly large dining hall, and meeting rooms, or in some cases even a few rooms where guests can stay overnight, like a small hotel. And this was not at all suited for that purpose. And for the faculty members to walk from, say, Watanabe Hall all the way to (laughs) College Hill for a short meeting, or a lunch, or something, would be an imposition on their time. So anyway, we just thought about it for a little bit and said, "Naw, this won't work." As far as I was concerned, if it were larger and could work, I would have done it. It wasn't my decision, the board would have had to approve it. As I said, the Athertons were very generous in giving it to the university, and I think that's probably thanks to Tom Hamilton who was the first occupant. Tom was very effective and respected and liked in the community here.

WN: Okay, I'd like to move on with---can you talk a little bit about collective bargaining with the faculty? I know that was a pretty controversial part of your term. (FM chuckles.) It was ongoing, but it came to a head towards the end of your term. What are your views on collective bargaining?

FM: I think collective bargaining for faculty, and limiting it to the faculty, I think is a big mistake. The nature of collective bargaining is to, basically, try to get everybody to be treated the same way, and in the ultimate, everybody gets the same pay. In certain situations when the employees are exploited by the employer, the employees band together and they have to deal with the employers who have all the power and the money and everything that goes with that. The employees have to get together. And, I think unions therefore, are fine things. But for universities and colleges with totally different traditions and values of the individual worth and the contribution [i.e., merits]—how you measure that, how you get recognition, et cetera—I think unions are harmful to the faculty themselves, and therefore to the university.

Faculty are, if anything, individuals. To try to get everybody together, everybody on the same pay scale, everybody. . . . Because we believe in, and practice, collegiality—unions don't get collegiality. (Laughs) Normal employees are told what the job is, and told not only what to do, how to do it, and by steps one, two, three, four. Faculty are totally different. We say to them, "You're the experts in the classroom. You will decide what is taught, how it's taught, et cetera." It's a totally different environment, and I really—personally—hated to see faculty being herded around like sheep, in some cases.

WN: Was there a national trend to unionize faculty, or was it more of a part of our local Hawai'i tradition of a strong union state? Which was the impetus for this?

FM: Well, there were other state universities with faculty unions, but they're done in different ways. When I came back to the university, the whole collective bargaining process was going on, and the faculty was designated as a union group. And it was really the faculty's choice on whether or not they wanted to be represented by a union, and if so, which union. I'm

told—because I wasn't there when that was happening—that the faculty felt that if they didn't unionize that they would be left out of any salary adjustment or raise, because they wouldn't have a voice.

I would (have said), "We're your voice." In the university, the administration and the faculty are, or should be, one (body). "We would be fighting for your economic welfare as well as whatever else we think we, the university, needs to make the university effective." And certainly having a strong faculty would be really the only way to achieve that. So, for us, keeping the faculty salary low, to (reduce cost) is not a motivation.

But for whatever reason, I guess they bought the argument from people who were trying to organize, that, "Look, unless you do this, you're going to be out in the cold." And there was, I believe, I understand, a strong minority (of faculty), less than half, who felt that unionizing was not good for the faculty, and not good for the university, but they lost. I also understand that because community colleges and Mānoa and Hilo were all considered to be one unit, all the votes had to be tallied from all campuses, that the community college faculty had a great influence on the outcome. If it were just Mānoa, or let's say Mānoa and Hilo on one hand, and community colleges on the other, people have told me that Mānoa and Hilo probably would have not been unionized and community colleges would have. But the vote was never taken (in that way). We did have, by the time I was there, a faculty [union]. And I think when I was—memory fades a little bit here—but I think when I was VP, the original union (had been) decertified.

WN: Was that the American Federation of Teachers . . .

FM: Or something like that. And then the present union [University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly] was elected, and replaced the other union. So what happened was that for several years the faculty didn't get a salary adjustment because they elected to have union representation, the initial union somehow didn't do what the faculty wanted, I guess, and so they got decertified. [They had a] new election, and by the time they got organized and then started to bargain for the faculty, as I recall, the faculty (had missed) the adjustments or raises that the other (unions received). And that, of course, added to the problem. It was a problem that they created, but nevertheless, a problem.

WN: I'm wondering, you were talking earlier about the community college faculty and the Mānoa faculty. Is that something you would favor, to have them together as one unit? Or do you feel that there are so many differences between the two? Because I know you recruit [for] Mānoa nationally and internationally to compete with the universities of the same stature, whereas community college instructors are, more or less, locally recruited. Do you feel that's an odd mix?

FM: Well, I feel that they should be separate, but not for that reason. Mānoa has a very broad mission that includes research. And as you point out, we have to recruit nationally or internationally to get the kind of people we want and need to have excellence in our programs. The community college faculty have quite a different mission. Well, going back to Mānoa, you have admissions standards, and if people don't meet those standards you can tell them, "Come back when you meet our standards." The community colleges, their philosophy is very (different) and very valid and very important, and that is they say, "We'll take you no matter what. And it's our job to bring you up to speed." So the emphasis is different, the [community

college] teachers are much more caring. The university professor can say, "Well, I'm going to teach you this, if you don't get it, tough, you're going to flunk." Whereas in the community college they say, "You don't understand, my door is open. Come see me, I'll help you." And they arrange the courses so that you can repeat as many times as you need to, which is not always good, but at least the whole attitude is different. And the reward system is different. And also the salary system is different. And the way you rank them, at that time, was different.

So, when you put them all into one union, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure that eventually they're going to merge. Somebody says at the community college, "I teach five courses, and you in Mānoa, you teach two courses, that's not fair." Well, if you look at teaching (only), sure, that's not fair. But, if you look at research, if you look at other kinds of requirements, and because the mission is different. . . . So by being in the same union, and comparing the duties and pay, the tendency to merge, to be fair, to make everything equal, which is what unions do, that's almost a certainty.

So it distorts the mission of the two institutions. So I would say—it may be kind of coldhearted—but I would say to the community college faculty, "If you want to do research, apply at Mānoa. Don't apply at a community college and say you want to do research. Your job is teaching." Now, any research connected with the teaching, yes, but research to further the field and to contribute to. . . . Say if you're a biology instructor at a community college, you don't do cutting-edge biology research (as a part of your duties), even if you have a Ph.D. Not at the community college, that's not what you (get paid) to do. Now you can get split appointments, so there are ways in which to accommodate. But, the institutional mission will get diluted. That individual focus or objective will get diffused and then, on top of all of that, you create morale problems. Initially the way it was started, at community colleges you were [classified as] instructor one, instructor two—and at the university it was assistant professor, associate professor. Well, I think now, community college (instructors) are called professors also.

So, I thought that if they were going to allow them to unionize, then it should've been done in two separate groups. I wouldn't have split Hilo and Mānoa because Hilo has [student] entry standards, et cetera, and the mission is different. Whether it's Hilo, West O'ahu, or Mānoa, you don't take them unless they're ready for college, whereas community colleges you take them even if the (student) can't read.

WN: So, in retrospect, then, you feel it would've been much easier to deal with the faculty if they were split into two separate categories?

FM: Yes, I would say before that though—well, I'm sorry. I guess I cannot say that we should have denied the faculty that vote. This was established in the constitution of the state, that public employees may be represented through collective bargaining. So you can't say to the faculty groups, "I'm sorry, you can't do that. We're going to deny you that." Although I guess there are states in which that happens.

But in any case, first, I believe that we shouldn't have faculty unions. But if, through constitutional reasons or whatever, that all public employees should have the right to at least make that choice, then I would say we should probably have given choices to community colleges as a group, and the University [of Hawai'i] at Mānoa, Hilo, and West O'ahu—which

didn't, I guess, exist at that time—a choice, as a separate group. They might have had quite different results coming out of that. A community college, as you know, was developed out of the [state] DOE [Department of Education] programs, so they're much more like the DOE, at least in terms of their philosophy and the kind of problems that they faced, and the kind of students that they accept.

WN: Also the recruiting base is probably somewhat similar.

FM: Well, they're the same in this one very important respect, and that is that, basically, they take anybody.

WN: Students.

FM: Yes. DOE has to accept all students, right? And in the same way, even though the community colleges don't have to, by philosophy and purpose, they do. So the way they need to think about students, think about their jobs, think about their mission, is predicated on that basic assumption, "We'll take anybody. We're not like the university that can set (entry) standards." It's like the DOE says, "We're not like the private schools. The private schools can accept the good ones, and reject the bad ones." Well, community colleges are like the DOE in that respect.

Anyway. . . . (Chuckles) But that's what, twenty years ago? More? And I think this is sort of an irreversible thing. Once you do it, it's like a scrambled egg, you cannot unscramble it. So, the issue now really is, what's the best way to deal with it? I think we can, at least, think about splitting it into two. And then let (each) bargain collectively for their different purposes.

WN: Well, this last union situation, my reading of it, is that it's the community college faculty that are the more militant, you know.

FM: They tend to be. Sure.

WN: Probably for the reasons that you've been giving.

FM: (Perhaps.)

WN: Okay, so anyway, that took up probably a lot of your time on . . .

FM: Yes. It affected everything we did. And it affected the way we managed, or how the university managed itself. Because, on the one hand, we tried to keep this basic collegiality idea, where faculty, as a group through their faculty standards and departmental committees, various academic committees, ran the university in terms of the academic programs. The academic administrators, like department chairmen and deans, had the real power and real responsibility in developing and delivering university education, research, et cetera. You can't do that from the boardroom. Some board members think they can, but you can't do that from the boardroom. You can set up the goals, the purposes, the priorities, (the incentives), but as to how you get there, what do you do to achieve those goals and priorities, you've got to depend on the people in the field. And in certain respects that's true of any business, or any enterprise. But the university, more than any other institution that I know, depends upon the people who are doing the actual work.

So when you superimpose on that a union system which is highly centralized. . . . You know in the first year, after the second union went in to place, we were hit with I don't know how many grievances and lawsuits. The union was trying to, you know, establish precedence, flex its muscle, to say, "Look, I'm taking care of you." And that really throws out the collegial process because now you have lawyers coming into the picture and trying to force you to do things on the basis of legality, which is fine, which is the way our society is run. But, what it does is also distort the values and the traditions of a free academic institution. The whole process changes, the relationship among faculty members and the administration changes because now it's us against them.

WN: So where does it put the president in all of this? I mean it's, in essence, an awkward role because you are no longer the spokesperson for the faculty in bargaining with the state. It's more or less the faculty bargaining with the state.

FM: Well, more accurately, it's the union bargaining with the state . . .

WN: So where did you find---what was your role in all of this?

FM: Well, my role, as I saw it, was to still do the best I could for the (whole) university. Students are not at the bargaining table. And when it comes to money, we are not even at the bargaining table. It's the state collective bargaining chief [i.e., state chief negotiator] (chuckles), and the union person bargaining. Now, having said that, we work closely on the state side, with people like [Department of Human Services director] Jimmy [James] Takushi, who was bargaining, and then there have been several others. But we tried to represent a view, which I would say is pro-university, which in many cases meant pro-faculty.

But you have to understand that when the union gets involved, the faculty will go in and say, "I want this, I want that," and they'll put everything into their initial (demand). Whether it makes sense, whether it's good for the faculty overall, they'd come in with their whole smorgasbord of requirements, some of which are legitimate, some of which we push ourselves, some which we are totally opposed to. Coming out of that process we need to finally get an agreement, and the process, as you say, is foreign to the university.

So on the money side we had really no control, the (governor) basically had the last say—or the only say—on how much money is available. Now, how we distribute that money, we have a say, and we would try to convince both the state and the union on how we should cut up (the pie). I'll give you an example of how we were able to influence that, at least on one occasion, and probably on every occasion we have some impact. On one occasion we were able to persuade both the state and the union that the amount of money that the state was willing to give the university for the collective bargaining settlement should be divided into basically an across-the-board adjustment, which is usually the only way unions bargain, and a small amount on a merit basis. And that was unheard of.

WN: You mean the merit side?

FM: Yes.

WN: Unheard of from a union perspective, but not a university perspective?

FM: (Both.) The university normally did it (across the board). Okay. And furthermore, the decision on who gets that merit was the administration's, not the union's. And by the administration, I meant that we would use a normal university collegial process to say who deserves an extra 5 percent, or whatever. And to the union's credit, they went along with that, but only once. (Laughs) The next time around they said, "No more." Because—and I guess it's understandable—when you do that in a normal setting, a fair number of people will think that they deserve it, and they deserve it more than the next guy. You know, human nature. So one way or the other, we make difficult decisions as to who'll get it, because the amount available is limited.

Any resentment, unhappiness, is (normally) directed against the administration, even though we do what the faculty recommends, let's say. (Chuckles) But now, when the union agrees to that then the grievances are also lodged against the union. They say, "How come you guys let them do this?" What we wanted to do was to say to the faculty, "(Performance makes a) difference."

But (with a union) that's harder to do. And I think that (collective bargaining is) really not a good system (for merit). But we do have, at the university at least, a very rigorous promotion and tenure system, which is another thing that I worked on in, I think, the second year I was the president. The first year I became the president, the promotion and tenure process was very close to the end, it was going through. And I just would sign whatever was recommended. The second year I had time to look at the files as they came in, and frankly, I was appalled at the quality of (some of) the recommendations. The standards that were set to determine whether or not the person should be promoted from assistant to associate, or associate to full professor, or whether the person should be granted tenure, those were all set. The standards for promotion, generally, were good. If we applied those standards, it was a very reasonable, and rigorous, set of standards.

WN: Let me just turn the tape.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: The problem was, in a number of cases, they [standards] weren't being applied. As to tenure, at that time we were giving tenure to assistant professors and instructors. And I felt that that would limit the university's ability to renew itself, and to improve itself. To me, it was unheard of. So on the promotion, I disagreed with a number of recommendations that basically sailed all the way through the dean, and the chancellor, and I (have to be) the first one that says no. I guess I must have said no to (several dozen) or so. And I think there were (a like number of grievances or lawsuits).

(Laughter)

FM: But anyway, I wasn't applying new criteria or new standards. I was just saying that these are criteria and . . .

WN: Those set up prior to you [becoming president], right?

FM: Yes. And so I wasn't saying, "Let's change the criteria." The criteria were okay. (I wanted the) the criteria (to be applied). To give one example, a person was being recommended for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor. To become an assistant professor in [most cases], you have to have a Ph.D. Okay? I was looking at the record, and I didn't see any Ph.D. This guy was hired without a Ph.D., because he had completed all of his work and he was all but ready to receive a Ph.D., at least that's the basis on which he was hired. So, now, some years later—five years, or whatever—he's eligible to be considered for associate professor, and I couldn't (find the Ph.D.) So I called up the (department) and (asked), "Did he ever finish his Ph.D.? If so, it's not in the files."

And (was told), "Well, no, he's still working on it."

I said, "How can you guys recommend (him) for an associate professor? He hasn't even met the requirements for an assistant professor." So I rejected it. And I think, for the president to take that (kind of) action was unprecedented. My unhappiness with that was, that should've been done by the departmental committee, or the college committee (the department chair, or dean, or the chancellor). There were several levels, but it was obvious that everybody's saying, "Well, if the department committee recommended it. . . ." It was just being passed through.

We have a very strong requirement for research at Mānoa. Some people were substituting work that was not research, and trying to claim research credit, so I rejected those. In terms of research (there are criteria for) publications in (refereed) journals. (But some of) the dossiers (contained only) articles for popular consumption rather than professional journals.

So some of them would say, "Well, what do you know about a particular field? How can you say. . . ."

And I (would respond), "It's not my judgment, I'm looking for the evidence that his peers think that he does good research."

And the way the system is set up, we don't have to prove that the guy hasn't met the standards, he has to prove that he has. He has to put together the application, or dossier, and say, "Here, this is my record, I think I've met your requirements."

And if he doesn't show it in there we can say, "I'm sorry, I don't see it there." So it's not my judgment whether or not a particular research he did was good or bad, (but evidence that his academic peers think so is what counts).

If he can't get it published in a (refereed) journal, which (goes through peer evaluation), then, as far as I'm concerned, his peers have said, "He hasn't met the standard." So anyway, I started applying those standards. As I've said, I generated a lot of hostility, which I accepted—expected. But I felt that we needed to do that.

One of the things that really upset me was that in some of the colleges or departments, they had this very excellent practice of bringing in outside people to evaluate, which a good university does. Because, say you were a biochemist, you wouldn't be the only person in that particular field. On a college [review] committee you have people from other disciplines or

departments sitting there. So you don't really get peer review. So some of the departments would ask people that they know in (the same) field to comment on this guy's research. And in reading through these things, there was a guy from Stanford [University] who said about a particular candidate—and I don't even remember the name or the department, but basically what he said was, "Well, this is probably good enough for UH."

And we're talking about national recognition. That's the criterion. And we do have faculty with national recognition where, the best people in the field at the best universities would say, "This guy is credible, he's done good work, et cetera." But if somebody said, "Well, that's probably good enough for UH," meaning that, at Stanford, he wouldn't make it, (it's a slap in the face).

So I said, "Okay." (Chuckles) So we ought to apply our standards. And then when we go and ask for money for the faculty, we want the same salary range as the best universities. Well, I guess I was more practical and said that we ought to be able to attract people in competition with the best public universities. And there are no slouches there, in the Berkeleys, or Michigans. Those were the level we hoped to attain. And those guys are, in many cases, as good as, or better than, [those at] the private universities.

So we would, in our salary surveys and stuff, pull up those numbers and try to justify our request for salary adjustment. Well, money isn't everything, but for a young Ph.D., or a young faculty member at some university, you can't expect him to take a pay cut to come to Hawai'i unless there are really unusual circumstances. We need to be competitive. But if we're going to do that then we can demand of the people we hire that they produce at the same level.

So I started applying that. There were some people who were doing basically campus politics—they're very active in different kinds of committees—and I knocked them all off. I said, "That's not scholarship. That's not even public service." Because they'd count that as public service. Public service is when you go outside to the community and do things to help the community. So I was pleased one day to hear that a person who was very active (on campus committees say that) he can't do committee work (anymore) because he's up for tenure and he (needs to concentrate on his research). So I said, "Oh, well, maybe the message is getting through."

So that was one set of problems, and as I've said I guess in a couple of years—because the next year I had the same thing happen—I must have generated 100 grievances.

WN: Were you the final tenure approval person? Was there someone higher? Did it go to the board of regents?

FM: Everything had to go to the board. But the board would never reverse the president. I would say, if they reversed the president, the president would resign on something as important as tenure. Or I would resign. I can't speak for all presidents. (Chuckles)

The other problem of granting tenure to instructors and assistant professors—assistant professors to me are apprentices. You hire---that's the first job out of college. You don't give that person, quote, a permanent job, especially if he's not good enough to become an associate professor. Again, other universities that I've been associated with, if you don't make that step, you're out. It's very cold-blooded, in a sense, but it was necessary to be able to upgrade the

quality of the faculty.

Now, I fully understood the value of instructors in our kind of program, because they do work, and they do it very well, but they can never progress beyond a certain stage. So I said that they ought to have job security. Assuming that they do a good job in filling an essential function for the university, they deserve job security, but tenure is not the way. So, what we ought to do is offer them renewable contracts. So if they start goofing off, they may not be fired, because firing is always very difficult to do in our society. But when it's contract renewal time we can say, "Sorry," and not renew that contract. Of course, in very flagrant cases you have to terminate the contract for cause.

So I felt that for instructors that performed a unique function, like (teaching beginning language courses, many of whom were) native language speakers, that they should (not) be given tenure. (But) assistant professors, now they're different, they're academic professionals. If they're not good enough to cut it, they should go look for jobs someplace else. The University of Hawai'i is a pretty good university, maybe you can go to a four-year college someplace and get tenure there. So anyway, we made it so that you don't get tenure unless you're good enough to be an associate professor. So instructors, as I say, they play an essential role and they deserve job security as long as they do a good job, but it's not an absolute guarantee of a job.

WN: I think community college instructors do get offered tenure.

FM: No, I'm talking about Mānoa.

WN: Oh, just Mānoa.

FM: Yes.

WN: I see.

FM: They're the lecturers and instructors. Instructors, you might say, are almost like full-time lecturers. Yes. But there was an instructor-type category.

WN: I see.

FM: But anyway, the basic point was tenure, which amounts to an institutional commitment to the faculty and the program that it represents, is a major decision, a major investment and should be very carefully awarded. That means that we should give it to people who are established and recognized. And you give a young faculty member like, say an assistant professor, a number of years to achieve that status, including some extensions, you have seven years to get there. If you don't do it by then, then say, "Go look for some other job." Because that slot can be filled by others who will do that.

WN: Did this create an adversarial relationship between you and the deans and directors? Because in many cases, you're undermining their recommendations?

FM: I don't know. I don't recall any dean coming and objecting to my decision. Certainly the union, a faculty member, and sometimes the departmental committees [objected]. But it was

more, not on the merit of the case, but more on the basis of, "How dare you disagree with us?"

They didn't say, "We disagree (with you) because of this, this, and this," you know.

I would say, "Show me the evidence. (If you can show it to me, I'll reconsider.)" But it was, to them, a matter of jurisdiction. And I said, "It's not a matter of jurisdiction. If you were talking jurisdiction, I do have jurisdiction. Look at the process. The process says, 'president has to approve.'" But what used to be a rubber stamp past a certain stage, primarily the first stage in the promotion and tenure committee, anything beyond that, even the chairman would hesitate to disagree. So, yes, it created a lot of animosity and unhappiness.

WN: Was promotion and tenure a big factor in bargaining for union contracts?

FM: Yes, the union . . .

WN: You still were able to maintain that control over promotion and tenure?

FM: Yes, the union wanted to go to arbitration on those things.

WN: I see.

FM: And so I told them, in no uncertain terms, that my position is no, I will take a strike on that (issue). I told them, "You guys want to put that in there and you want to strike for it? We'll accept the strike." Now, the board might have reversed me . . .

(Laughter)

FM: . . . or the politicians might get worried and you know, put pressure. But I said, "As far as the university president is concerned, we'll take a strike on that issue." Because I believe so strongly in the principle of peer evaluation and no union—no lawyer—is going to say, "This guy ought to be a full professor." That I won't accept.

So there were attempts, to be sure, but I never budged on that. I didn't say, "Well, you know, we'll talk about it." I said, "Absolutely not. We'll take a strike on that."

WN: What about post-tenure review? I'm sure that was something that you favored?

FM: Yes.

WN: But that was probably a sticking point also.

FM: Oh, absolutely. Post-tenure review is something that I failed to get done. I believed in it, but we were not able—when I was there—to get it done. I heard secondhand, but from very reliable [sources], of some people making tenure who said, "Oh, I made it, now I can do anything I want. They can't fire me." It's so terrible. To be sure, there are not many of those. In fact, probably very few, looking at all the faculty, because of their pride. But there are (a few) that take advantage. And for those people—and for the benefit of those who do work hard, who do try to keep up—we say that there are people like that who shouldn't have gotten

tenure in the first place, but if they did, every five years we're going to look at their record. And we're not going to fire the person if they don't measure up, but we will let them know that—again in the peer-review process—your peers don't think that you're producing, and maybe develop some kind of program (to help him become productive). If the person hasn't done any research, maybe encourage him or her to get involved with another faculty member who is active and kind of get back in the groove. And in the worst case, yes, fire that person. The faculty contend that, "Short of financial exigencies you can't fire me."

I say, "That's not true. We can fire you if you don't do your job."

When they ask for tenure, the traditional tenure is for academic freedom. You need academic freedom and tenure is the way to protect it. I buy that. Even though with our constitutional protection now, you know, for free speech, that extends to everybody. Any person that you try to fire on the basis of political beliefs or those things, you're going to lose, the university is going to lose. But tenure is not intended as protection against unlawful behavior, incompetence, things like that. But among the many things that we tried to do, that was one that I believed in but couldn't get done.

WN: Because of collective bargaining?

FM: Yes. There was strong opposition. Rejecting promotion [applications], I didn't have to get people to agree with it, it was already in the process. It was my decision. I could do it. But, post-tenure review is clearly a collective bargaining issue, so I wasn't able to do it. Well, I wouldn't say clearly a collective bargaining issue, but because it's a peer-review process, (we would need the faculty's cooperation). If we were to change the process so that it's an outside review independent of the faculty, it might've worked. But if the review is to be done by the faculty and the faculty opposed it, it's not going to work. So, anyway. . . .

(Laughter)

WN: As president, were you pressured or expected to support the faculty and the faculty union?

FM: Yes and no. As you pointed out earlier, I'm sort of caught between both sides, if you want to categorize it that way. As I said, I tried to do what's best for the university. To me, it was a process that I had to (learn). It determined who I should talk to on certain issues. On certain issues I couldn't talk to the faculty directly because that would be unfair labor practice, which is ridiculous in a collegial society. That's the kind of absurdities that occur when you introduce a (faculty) union into a university.

So say if there's an issue, I think probably from the faculty side [i.e., point of view] I'm only looking at the administrative side, but I really looked at what's best for the university. And sometimes I agreed with the faculty, in fact most of the time I agreed with the faculty, and sometimes I disagreed with the faculty. And I accept the fact that when I agree with them they don't remember it.

(Laughter)

FM: When I disagree with them, they remember it.

WN: There was the perception, probably, that by disagreeing with the faculty you were, in essence, antiuniversity.

FM: Well yes, because the faculty thinks that they're the university.

WN: Right. By being antiuniversity you were, in essence, pro-employer, pro-state. Did you feel that?

FM: Well, I was never antiuniversity. I was clearly antiunion. Right? Anti-faculty union. Now, the clerical unions and the groundskeepers, those people, I have no problem with the union. They have a grievance, let's talk about it, because they don't have collegiality. In my own mind I was always pro-university. Now, people may disagree as to what I should have been for or against, but as I said, I see the university as a totality of which the faculty is the key part.

Purely in a managerial sense, my job as a manager is to develop that resource, protect it, and make sure that resource is used in the most effective manner possible to achieve institutional goals. Okay, that's kind of a cold-blooded way of explaining it, but the faculty is what makes the institution. Now what does the institution do? The institution provides, (for example), education to the students. Without the faculty you can't provide the education, of course, without the students you don't have anything for the faculty to do. So they're equally important.

The additional consideration—and this is where I don't think anyone would disagree—I think the complication of the problem comes in when I also say that the quality of what goes on is also important. We can have a bunch of faculty, but if they're not well qualified, or if they're well qualified but not working effectively, then I say, "We're not doing the job we should be doing." So when we start talking about priorities and quality—what level of quality, et cetera—that's where the issues arise, and that's where people may think, or some faculty may think that I'm against the university. When I say to them that, "You're not going to get tenure here." Or that, "This program is weak. Unless you guys improve it, we're going to terminate it."

And they say, "Well, that's against the university." Or, "Against the students because students want that."

But I guess my position is, the students, unless they can get a first-rate education, they're being cheated. They're going to spend four, five, six years of their lives to get a second-rate degree that's not worth much when they go out into the public. We're cheating them. So I'm sure some of the things that I espoused, promoted, and some of the actions that I took could be interpreted in different ways by different people. That's the nature of our society. So I guess it depends on how you look at the university. And I tried to look at the university as a dynamic, complex organization with competing demands and conflicting interests, and tried to harmonize that so that we make the right decisions.

And also in making the decisions, I always tried to look at the long term. I didn't care that much about expediency, or short term, relieve the pressure kind of action. Because if you do that, you're going to lose control after a while in the sense that if you want to build the university as a quality institution, known and respected in its chosen fields nationally, internationally, you better maintain those expectations and the requirements. It's easy enough to say, "Well, there's only a few of these guys, why don't we let them through?" It's like saying to a class, "I should really flunk (some of) you, but I'll let you through." And you just cannot compromise on those things.

Incidentally, when I started this job, as president, I felt that there are a number of things that needed to be done, which would be unpopular. So I thought that, if I'm lucky, (chuckles) I'll last five years. Which at that time was said to be, more or less, the average. And that I wouldn't be surprised if, say within two or three years—because you enjoy a kind of a honeymoon period and then the resentment starts to build up—I would start getting faculty resolutions of (laughs) no confidence, because the sort of things that I did were certainly unusual, if not unprecedented.

Another thing was that, in terms of quality, I felt that Mānoa should set higher standards for admission. I felt that Mānoa was playing a resource game; the more students they could get, the more resources they'll get. And I said, "No, I'd rather have Mānoa smaller and of higher quality, and worry about the resources after that." You know, we were taking people with SAT scores of what, 400? I think 425, as I recall. The numbers may not be precisely right, but some (low) number that I couldn't believe.

Now, when we didn't have the community colleges as a state university, that made sense. If we didn't have the community colleges, I would say, "Yeah, okay, that's all right." But that means we have to use our resources to take care of the students that we admit at that level. And we were teaching, frankly, (some) pre-college courses, you know, (remedial) high school courses. But now that we have the community colleges, whose mission is to take care of those kids who didn't study hard in high school or who want to come back after having worked and now have to get in the groove again. So Mānoa should set a standard that is high enough so that the kind of quality expectations that the students are going to have to live up to, that they would have a better-than-even chance of succeeding. Because if you don't do that, if you take the kids who don't qualify, what's going to happen? You're going to drop (not only your entrance requirements, but you are going to lower the performance) standards. I thought Mānoa was too big—and projected to be bigger—that we should aim for a smaller Mānoa, and a larger proportion of graduate programs, of graduate students. The sort of number that I was playing with was a total of maybe, 15,000: 10,000 undergraduates, 5,000 graduates. Or 20,000 at the most. But they were projecting 30,000 and more. And I don't know where we ended up on that one.

WN: Yeah, I don't even know what the enrollment is now.

FM: And also I think part of that was, you sort of admit the students because you have all these courses. And to me, we had too many courses. An interesting, I would say surprising, statistic was that in terms of faculty-student ratio, UH Mānoa was richer than Berkeley. Berkeley has fewer faculty per 10,000 students (than UH). That was true when I was president. Of course, the regents used to get on me, and I explained that well, we're doing a lot of specialty things that no other university does—primarily in Asian (languages)—and we take pride in saying that we offer forty languages, some of which are not offered at any other university in the United States. And therefore, say if you have advanced courses in (a rare) language or history course, you may have only one or two students. In order to build that area of excellence that's the price you pay. And I agree with that, I buy that.

But, on the other hand, (offering) courses that are, more or less, standard courses and providing too many different, you might say, enrichment-type courses. If you had to go back to the basics, in other words, you don't need that much. And my view is, after all, education is a lifelong process, the important thing is to take these four years of very valuable hunk of time

from a person's life and give them a very high level of understanding and competence in the basic courses. After that, he or she can do it on their own. You don't have to provide another course with a few wrinkles that if a person studied it at home, once he gets the basics, he can do it. So we (could) cut out all that other stuff, concentrate on the basics, reduce class size if necessary to get the basics done. For some people, and I can see from some of the faculty point of view, that would be working against the university.

WN: Well, in essence you're talking layoffs though, right?

FM: What it amounts to, and these are all interrelated, is that the university will end up with fewer faculty jobs, a tighter series of courses that are maybe harder for the students. So what you do is you raise the standard for the students, you raise the standard for the faculty, and you tighten the programs and the curriculum. But the net result is that the University of Hawai'i would really be one of the great universities. And if a great university is the goal, which we all say it is, then that's what you gotta do. And yes, to answer your question, we may lose some jobs along the way. Now, I consider that a (consequential) issue, (not a determining one).

The student demand is still going to be there, right? So if Mānoa goes from 35,000 students to 20,000 (because of admission standards), those students are going to go where? To the community colleges. Okay? The community colleges are going to need more faculty. So, we can say to the university [faculty members] person involved in those kinds of programs, "We'll transfer you to the community colleges."

But for the person at Mānoa, and I can understand this too, it's a slap in the face. The guy says, "I'm a professor at the university, but now I'm being transferred to the community college." There's an ego that's going to get bruised, and I can see why he would oppose that, he or she. So I understand their opposition to something like that.

WN: I guess—you were kind of talking about downsizing or transferring and so forth—again it becomes a collective bargaining, (laughs) union thing.

FM: Yeah, right, right.

WN: So, it brings us back to the . . .

FM: But the thing that I was trying to do applies even if we had lots of money. I'm saying raising the standards and tightening the courses. I would prefer to tighten the courses and use smaller class size. So when we say we're doing this for the students, we really are. And then at the same time, taking care of the faculty because we gotta have good faculty there. But (chuckles) when you work with people it's always very, very difficult.

WN: Shall we stop here?

FM: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 25-31-15-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Fujio Matsuda (FM)

Mānoa, O'ahu

May 1, 1997

BY: Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto (MK) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This an interview with Dr. Fujio Matsuda for the UH presidents oral history project on May 1, 1997, at his office in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michiko Kodama-Nishimoto.

Okay, let's begin our fifteenth and final session.

(Laughter)

FM: Okay. Great.

WN: I wanted to just talk briefly about the two-day faculty strike [in November 1983], because we talked last time about collective bargaining, and your philosophy, and so forth.

FM: Yes.

WN: And I was just wondering what your role in the strike was?

FM: I would say, peripheral (chuckles). Of course I was involved in it from say, the management side, and it sort of pains me to characterize what happens in the university as management [versus] labor, but that's what it was. A strike is a labor union's ultimate weapon, and they use it to hurt management to the point where management—in their eyes—sees the light, and negotiates. And in an academic institution, especially involving faculty, I think that that weapon hurts the students. Speaking, again, cold-bloodedly from the state's point of view and not the university's point of view, when the unions go out on strike, they save [the state] money because payroll is one of the biggest costs, and people are off the payroll. So, it's primarily a financial issue, and as we discussed the last time, we don't have any say as to the financial package.

And at one point during the many years of negotiating—biennial negotiations—the [public employee] unions formed a coalition. They went in as a body and they asked for the same thing. Whether you're a laborer in the blue-collar union [United Public Workers] or high school principals—which is another union [Hawai'i Government Employees Association]—or university faculty [University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly], they all asked for the same thing. So, I think in this case [November 1983] the university faculty, as I recall—and again

I'm a little blurred in this memory—they were trying to get something different [from the other unions] and they weren't getting it so they finally went on that two-day work stoppage.

WN: When you said---you characterized yourself as management . . .

FM: Yeah.

WN: Did you see yourself as management because, in essence, the governor and the state were actually management, so. . . .

FM: To me, they're the (laughs) financial resource, they don't manage the university.

WN: Right. Okay, so you did look at yourself, in this situation, as being management?

FM: Yes, and it's to management's benefit to solve the problem because my responsibility is to provide education for the students and see that research happens, et cetera. Okay? So when the strike happens that disrupts that process, it's my problem. Unfortunately I don't have the authority or the legal resources to solve the problem. I have to wait for somebody else to solve the problem. But I looked at myself as the. . . . Well, I'm talking about the strike situation as management because that's clearly a management-labor mode of operation which I'd rather not be in, but that's what we were in. So I didn't look at myself as [being] part of the state.

So you recognize the state's financial constraints, and we certainly did not want to be discriminated against with other unions getting more than our faculty. But realistically, we would argue that because we recruit nationally and internationally, we're different from the other unions and we need to be competitive, and that means that our salary structure, and the compensation package generally, but most of it is salary, should be comparable with our competition. We are trying to compete at the public universities' level, and with the best of them. That's the argument we make. But from the state [chief] negotiator's point of view, usually they'd say, "Well, that's immaterial." (Chuckles) Unfortunately they look at us as just another state department which we claim we are not. No other department of the state recruits nationally, except on rare occasions when they cannot find someone [locally]. They don't do it as a common practice, which we do.

And in the days when we were not unionized it was up to the university—the administration and the faculty—to try to put a package together. And there would be a lot of internal debates as well. Of course the faculty always wants as much as they can get, which is understandable, but from (the university's) point of view we know that the resources are limited. So we have to try to get the best possible distribution of resources to get our job done the best we can. So there are those internal negotiations, but we're always looking at our competition, you know the Berkeleys and the Michigans and see what we have to offer to compete against them. So that's my feeling that they would have been better off if we all paraded in that mode. I think if you go into the union mode then you're going to be lumped in with the other unions. But, again . . .

(Laughter)

FM: We're twenty years past that argument.

- WN: You characterized it as a work stoppage which is, in essence, what it was because nothing really was gained in terms of demands. The state was offering 0 percent first year, and 2.88 [percent] the second year, and I think the union came up with the 7 percent, or whatever. But, in essence, it really was more of a demonstrative showing of solidarity and so forth. So what was the aftermath of the strike? Was there animosities? Was it the same as it was before?
- FM: I don't think it had any lasting effect. And very little, if any, immediate financial impact in terms of what they got. Normally what they try to negotiate (in the package) after such a work stoppage or strike is to recoup (chuckles) the losses right? So, in that respect, they come out even. So what's the net result? The students lost two days of education. Well, two days maybe they can make up, but if it went longer than that, the state comes out whole because they say, "Well, we were going to pay them that anyway." The union comes out whole, at least, in the short run. They establish a higher base maybe, but they've lost a lot of money. So the net loser is only the students.
- WN: Okay. So, 1983, October you announced that you were going to be stepping down.
- FM: Yes.
- WN: I don't mean to put dates into it because you probably don't remember the sequence of things but, according to the media, you did announce prior to the strike. One of the reasons given was that you were offered this position with RCUH [Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i].
- FM: Yes. But I wasn't offered it. I was on the RCUH board ex officio, so I know what's happening. Wytze Gorter was going to be seventy and at that time there was no requirement anymore that people retire when you reach age seventy, but Wytze announced that he's going to retire anyway when he reaches that date. And because by then I would've been in the job [as UH president] ten years, and (chuckles) after ten years you've done about everything you can. And, as I was telling you last time, that's twice as long as I thought I would have (lasted).
- WN: When you came into office you expected to stay five [years]?
- FM: If I was lucky, yeah. Because of the things that we talked about that I thought needed to be done, which generally results in the downfall of university presidents.
- (Laughter)
- FM: But the---five years was the average and I thought if I reached the average I'd be satisfied, and I'd do as much as I can within five years. You know, you start with a clean slate with maybe a few assets—goodwill, give him a chance, whatever, yeah? In five years you've lost all the assets, (laughs) you're in debt in terms of the goodwill, in terms of the acceptance level. If you do things that are good for people, they appreciate it, but they don't necessarily remember it. If you do something that's bad for them, they remember it.

So, anytime you make a decision, hopefully it's a right decision. Hopefully most people will agree with you, but there are always some that don't. And over time, on different issues you accumulate different groups of people who disagree with you for different reasons. But the

accumulation of that is sufficient to make it difficult for you to do things. And at that point, even if you're right, if you cannot do it, then you bring somebody else in with a clean slate and he does the same thing, but he can do it because he's got now the—you know, he starts with a (chuckles) stack of chips that he can use.

So I look at it philosophically. After a while, it's not really what I want that's important. What's important is, can you benefit the university? And if you can't anymore, then you ought to step aside and let somebody else come in, hopefully, who has the same philosophy and goals and he will continue. But also you always admit the possibility that even though you believe it, maybe others don't, and maybe you're wrong and the others are right. And so if you bring in a new person with fresh eyes, fresh views, and fresh style, whatever, then there is an opportunity for change. But if you don't then you'll—I don't change easily, so I persist in my values and my goals. And so I say after ten years it's time to move on.

So anyway, that's why I said I was interested in going to RCUH [as executive director]. You know, research is close to my heart. And I believe strongly that research is good for the university, but just as important, it's good for the state. And it's a job that I thought I would enjoy doing. And when I decided that I would like to have the job, then I said that I should resign for two reasons. One, it's time; but second, because I'm now a candidate for another job. And whether I get it or not, I was going to leave. It wasn't a position where, let's say if I don't get the RCUH job I'm going to stay on as president. This is only a personal way of operating, but if I'm looking for another job, that means the job that I have is not, for whatever reason (chuckles), what you want anymore. And so I felt if that's the case, I should tell the board. These things can't be kept a secret anyway, but as a matter of philosophy, if I'm a candidate for another job, I'm going to say, "I'm leaving this job." I'm not going to say, "Well, if I don't get the job I'll stay here." Meaning they're your second choice. I'd rather be over there, but if I don't get it I'm going to stay here. I don't operate that way. So that's why I announced it.

WN: Would you say that your first five years were easier and more pleasant than your second five years?

FM: No, I don't think I can say that. It was challenging throughout. It was enjoyable maybe in a sort of perverse way.

(Laughter)

FM: Because I enjoy challenges. I see a tough problem and I see it as a problem that needs to be solved. And that's always a challenge. It's interesting. You get frustrated, you get angry, you get disappointed, happy if it works. So ten years on many different issues—all the way through it was challenging. So I wouldn't say that the first years were better or worse than the last years.

WN: Did you feel at any time that you were losing control of the situation?

FM: I never had control. (Laughs)

WN: Really, you did feel that way?

FM: Yes. Because I really believed in the fact that the university—its main purpose and its main activity—is teaching and research. And that is a faculty activity, you cannot control that. In fact, if you try to control that, it is counterproductive.

I think, however, as president of the university, you have to manage it, which is not the same as control. You have to provide the resources, the means, the goals. Not to dictate it, but to get the people to understand and hopefully agree with you, and that's what you worked with. And if they disagree with you, you cannot say, "I order you to do this." The best we can do is withhold resources. And when you turn off a program, because let's say we think the quality is shabby, what you're basically doing is withholding the resources.

But actually, directly doing things, is not possible. In order to encourage innovation and in order to provide the resources to the faculty, to allow that to happen, I established the educational improvement fund. I took \$(2) million, (\$1 million per year), off the top of the university's budget, set it aside, and announced that that amount of money—it's a lot of money—is available to faculty who want to try some innovative things. Not for research, as such, because that's not enough, but for educational research—new programs, new classes, new methods—that will be available. And the determination of who gets that money, how much, was done through a faculty committee. So those are the things that I can do. But I can't call a faculty member and say, "I want you to look into this, or improve this." So, to answer your question, no. I never felt that I had control of the university.

WN: What I meant—I didn't mean control in the negative sense, but control in the sense of, you know, having your hands in the things that you think you should have your hands in. Control in the sense that you know what's going on.

FM: No, I didn't have that. (Chuckles) Even in that sense. I've had some people who were reporting to me directly, and those people, the administrative people, I did have some control over. Meaning that I hire and fire them. Faculty, the president doesn't hire or fire. In the ultimate sense, (the board does). But in terms of initiating those kinds of actions, I don't. Whereas, a chancellor or a vice-president, I do, because I hire them, it's my decision who gets hired. And when they get fired, it's my decision. In that sense, I do control those people.

But even there, when I hire somebody, I hire somebody who is able, experienced, and hopefully a lot better than I am about (areas that are not my) field. So I don't try to tell them what to do in an area that they know better than I. But I can interpret, in terms of the totality of the university, what he or she should be doing, and how well he or she is doing in terms of meeting those goals.

So the Durwood Long situation, I clearly wasn't in control there, right? It had gotten out of control. I tried to keep it within the university, first between me and Durwood. Then next within the university, involving the members of the board, et cetera, and I lost control when (Durwood involved the) politicians, for which Durwood was fired. And that's clearly an extreme case. But even within the university—Mānoa that is—the Mānoa chancellor, who I appoint, of course with the board's approval—I really control that. Because if the board did not approve my recommendation, or if they impose a chancellor on me that I decide that I don't want, that's when not me only, but any president would resign. So to that extent, I control it.

And from the board's point of view—I can't speak for them—but for the board to lose a president because they wanted to impose their will on the president (on something like that), that's a losing battle for them in the public's eyes, and in the university's eyes, so they don't do it. (They should fire the president rather than tell him who to hire, because it would show lack of confidence in the president's judgment. That, they can defend.)

So Mānoa has always been a difficult institution. The chancellor of that campus has a tough job, because he's between the president and the deans. I personally felt that I had good relationships with the deans, I felt like I understood their needs, their problems. I used to characterize university management, at least the way I did it, as a strong dean system. Deans of colleges have responsibility for the academic units. I think the chancellor sort of coordinates what the deans do, but the real academic leadership on the campus, in my view, was (provided by) the deans. And I thought they should have a lot of authority to be able to make decisions about their programs.

WN: In taking that philosophy, there was a 1983 Mānoa faculty senate report and [one] recommendation of that was to dismantle the central administration and give more authority to chancellors, or return to the pre-Cleveland organization where the UH president becomes the chief executive officer for Mānoa.

FM: Yes.

WN: So, by taking that philosophy, were you criticized for being president and, in essence what you're saying is committing some sort of altruism?

FM: Well, yeah, there was a perception that the central administration was too big, and that I had lots of people running around Bachman Hall just inventing mischief for the [Mānoa] campus. But the central administration included the fiscal, accounting-type people, the personnel (office), and the computer system. (We covered this matter before.)

So if you take those away, and if you say, "Okay, what was left in central administration?" It was me and one vice-president. Me and a VP for academic affairs, and a few assistants, a few secretaries. And then under the VP academic affairs we had academic staff—academic system-type, coordination-type staff. I did my own study once and was satisfied that the way I had organized and was conducting business and everybody worked their tail off under me, was very compact and very efficient. I think if you analyze the administrative structure that I employed and what happened since then—well, anybody can make that comparison and they can reach their own conclusions.

I think the important part, to me, was—and this is consistent with what I was saying—the academic side, where they did have the authority. I depended on them and the dean primarily, to initiate, to maintain, to improve the programs. In there, there was no interference. I think on the administrative processes, if they ignore (policy) and if they don't follow the procedures, it messes up (everything). When we use public funds we have to be able to account for what we do and when you don't follow procedures, you lay yourself open to discrimination suits and stuff. So anyway, it's a messy way to operate, but that's the kind of world we live in. So, I disagreed with that. (Laughs)

WN: Before I sort of conclude these interviews asking about reflections and stuff, I wanted to ask

you about Al Simone. You hired him as vice president for academic affairs [in 1983] . . .

FM: Yes.

WN: Was it with the idea that he may be a candidate for president?

FM: Yes. When I look for a VP for academic affairs, I always think of that person not only for the VP job, but as a potential president. I don't want a VP working for me, where that's as high or as far as he can go. Now, when we search for a new president, of course we (want to) look nationally, but I would certainly want a strong, internal candidate. And there are several, you might say classes, of people. One would be—the most logical one would be—the VP for academic affairs. Another one would be one or the other of the chancellors. And to me, a very strong pool of candidates should exist in the deans because again, I feel that the deans are the real academic leaders.

And if a person can lead a major college, or even a minor college, and do that with vision and effectiveness and charisma, whatever, to make him a good dean, I think that person could become a good president. The vice president is a staff position, so he may understand the framework and the theory, et cetera. Conceptually he'd be excellent. The deans have the day-to-day hands-on experience working directly with faculty, directly with program, making tough budget decisions, et cetera. And the chancellor is somewhere in between. So one of my responsibilities as president is to build a team so that there'll be several good, strong candidates from within the university and the VP certainly should be one of the top candidates.

MK: You just said that the VP should be one of the top candidates, but did you see Albert Simone as the top, or one of the top?

FM: One of the top, yes. Incidentally, Al was a very effective dean of [The University of Cincinnati College of Business Administration], so he fits that requirement. I'd be a little concerned about a VP that had nothing but staff jobs. So he was an experienced dean in his previous job. At the University [of Hawai'i] he wasn't there very long [one year], so in that respect he was not, you might say, fully seasoned as (a VP). But if you look at his total experience, not just at the University of Hawai'i, he made an excellent candidate.

MK: You know I've been recently reading David Yount's book, *Who Runs the University?* and a lot of it deals with President Simone. And he characterizes President Simone as someone who would throw up 100 balls and he would catch some of them. You know, some would fall, but others he would catch. And then he would throw up more balls, and some he would catch again and others would fall. Now, in your estimation, your experience with him, with Dr. Simone, is that an accurate characterization? [Actually, Yount claims in his book that the 100-ball characterization is Simone's: "Using one of his favorite metaphors, Simone used to tell people that if he threw 100 balls in the air and caught fifty of them, that was twice as good as throwing twenty-five balls in the air and catching them all. . . . Critics commenting privately on the 100-ball metaphor acknowledged that Simone did have 100 balls in the air at any given time, but after tossing them up, he just walked away. They only reason so many balls were caught, they said, was that Simone's staff soon became adept at detecting his random launches and predicting their trajectories."]

FM: I wouldn't say accurate, I would say that might be a caricature. (WN laughs.) But Al was very

enthusiastic about everything that he did.

(Somebody knocks on the door. Taping stops, then resumes.)

FM: So as I was saying, I like Al and I get along well with Al. We do have different styles. He's very enthusiastic. He launches himself into all kinds of activities and I'm not like that. I weigh things more carefully. You know, different styles. But he and I had very similar philosophies and goals about what the university should be. So I was very comfortable with the idea that Al was going to be president. In fact, I thought he was a better candidate than the guy who took it and (changed his mind) [M. Cecil Mackey]. So I was happy when (Al) got the job.

Al himself told me one day that his style is that he'd (start) a lot of stuff, but he needs people to pick up after him, is the way he put it. And if you look at his track record, what he did as the dean, he got good community support when he was at Cincinnati. We sent people to Cincinnati to talk to the people there. When you choose somebody as important as a VP, you don't just do a paper search.

So when he became president he asked me [for some] advice. And I told him, "Al, you've got to where you are by being who you are. You don't need my advice. (Chuckles) You just do what you think is right. If you feel it in your gut that it's the right thing to do, go do it." So I purposely stayed away from the university when he was president, because I do believe that to have the previous guy hanging around cramps one's style. It's not good for him or the university. Besides, if you're there, if you don't agree with him you might say something. But heck, it's not your job anymore, it's his job. And it's his neck. I thought he did a good job.

WN: Would David Yount characterize Dr. Matsuda in the same way, the balls?

MK: No.

WN: Okay, so why don't we ask you this question then?

MK: Oh yeah, that's a good . . .

WN: How would you characterize yourself with the ball analogy?

FM: I would make some initial judgment about whether the balls are worth tossing. I don't just throw it up to see what happens, and maybe that's the difference. So I guess my style is a little more deliberate.

MK: Okay.

WN: Examine each ball, throw up maybe ten carefully, and maybe catch eight. (Laughs)

FM: No. If I throw up ten, I expect to catch all ten.

WN: Oh, okay.

FM: Now, in spite of my best guess, or best judgment, or best efforts, some will inevitably fall. But I don't throw things up there that I think are going to fall. I won't toss it up if I have no idea

what's going to happen.

MK: (To WN) Later on you have to go back to Harlan [Cleveland] and ask him these questions.

WN: Oh yeah. I should ask him. Let me turn the tape over.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

FM: And I guess the reason I operate in that way is that if it's only ideas that you're talking [about], in a brainstorming session, let's examine everything, whatever crazy ideas, whatever, let's do it. But that's characterized as a brainstorming session where you look at all possibilities no matter how crazy it may sound. But when you go beyond that and you say, "Why don't we try this, why don't we try that?" we're going to spend resources. We're going to spend people's time and, well. . . .

Anyway, the president of the university, I think, does have some influence. And so if you toss out some ideas, people are going to take you seriously, and they should. But if they say, "Oh yeah, that's another one of his hair-brained ideas." (Chuckles) You don't want that, and I'm not suggesting by any means that Al did that. But what I think he did was he thought he tried out these ideas that he thought were good. I like the way he characterized it. He needed people to clean up after him. Meaning that once he gets the stuff launched then somebody else had to pick it up and move with it. Now that, I think, is a good way to do things if you're sure that there are people behind that can pick it up and run with it and they have the resources to do that.

Of course, Al was fortunate, in a sense that he had John Waihee as the governor, but also as a good personal friend. And also fortunately, the state had a lot of money at that time. So he was able to get the resources, I think, that maybe he needed to operate in that way. If you don't have the resources, and if you're talking about having to cut back programs, you can't operate in that mode. You do still need to innovate, you do still need to make changes, but you have to be a lot more careful about how you do those things.

WN: What was your relationship like with Governor Ariyoshi?

FM: I would characterize that as distant (when I was president. Now we're good friends.) He had a view about the university that I disagreed with. My basic belief—conviction—that the university is different from other state (agencies)—and not (only) for the sake of the university, but for the sake of the state—it ought to be treated differently, and for the reasons that I've discussed. But on more than one occasion, George said, "Why should the university be different?" And so I thought he had a very narrow view of the university as just another state agency.

So in his days when there were say, budget cuts, they were always across the board. When we had the 1978 constitutional convention, we were trying to strengthen the authority of the board with respect to the internal management of the university. His budget and finance people were

actively opposing it in the convention. So I think there's an ideological difference there. And on that issue, I don't think we ever agreed (while I was president. In fairness to George, he later supported more flexibility for the university, when Al was president.)

WN: So the relationship between Waihee and Simone did have that relation? Did they have that philosophy of the university being separate from the other departments?

FM: No. Quite the contrary. And again, you might ask Al about that one. There was a strong political alliance there. Al Simone publicly came out in support of John Waihee in the [1986] primary [election for governor], and of course in the general election. My position was quite the opposite. I felt that when I became a president, that there were all kinds of complaints, criticisms of the university, and of the political structure in the state, that the university was politicized and that there's all kinds of political interference in the university. And I agreed with that. There was too much of that. There shouldn't be any, but you can't have perfection.

And to make a point, in my previous role as director of transportation, which is a political appointment—you're appointed by the governor—you're dealing with politicians. You know, somebody's road needs to be fixed, the politician calls, and that's a fact of life and you need to operate in that mode. But in the university it's not part of the political machinery. You don't change a university president every time you change the governor. In some places that happens and it shouldn't happen here.

So the president should not depend upon who the governor is. And so when I became president, carrying on from my previous relationship with legislators and other elected officials, they'd send me [political fund-raiser] tickets. And I'd send them all back. And I think that too was unheard of. And people, because I came from the Department of Transportation, assumed that I was a political animal. But even good friends of mine—people like Spark Matsunaga and some of the people in the legislature that I became good friends with, and who I used to support by buying a few tickets—I would send it back to them and explain that the university president should not get involved in elective politics, and, "I wish you luck, but here are the tickets." And I did that to George [Ariyoshi], did that to whomever would send tickets to me.

So, I wanted to establish that wall between the political world and the university. And I used to tell the faculty that, "Don't complain about legislators coming in and trying to tell you who to hire, or who to admit. If you go to them and ask for a personal favor to get money for your program, then you establish the opportunity—you open the door for them to come in. And if a friendly neighborhood legislator comes in and asks you to take care of a constituent's son for your school, (because) you went to him for money for your program, don't complain about that guy." So I told them it's a two-way street and we had to clean it up. And the way I did it, without telling them they should do the same, is just insulate myself from that process. Now, I felt that in the short run that might hurt the university because some small-minded legislator will say, "Who the hell does he think he is?" and retaliate by withholding funding. But I thought that in the long run to establish a university of high-quality, loved and respected by the people—I don't care if the politicians loved us—but the people themselves get a good university. And if the politician opposes (the university), he'll lose.

So that's why I think in the constitutional convention, if you go directly to the people, if you can get the politicians out of it, the university will win. The Department of Education will win.

But if you depend upon legislation, then that's a different matter.

I've known (Governor Ariyoshi) for a long time, but we were never close. After he left the governorship [in 1986] and after I left the university [in 1984] we worked together on a number of things and we (have become good) friends. Which was another common, I think, misconception. (People thought we were good friends and political allies, and I should be able to leverage that to get money and favored treatment for the university.)

And even with the good friends in the legislature, I would never presume on friendship to sell a program. I would always say, "You gotta sell it on merit." And you gotta say the same thing to whomever, whether it's on the house side or the senate side, or somebody you know or somebody you don't know. You have to tell the same story. Which is kind of a rigid way—in politics you gotta be flexible, right? (Chuckles) I'm not a politician. I don't make a good politician.

WN: Okay. When you first came to the university, I guess in eighty—sorry, '74—starting as president.

FM: Yes.

WN: Would you say that UH was a better place after you left?

FM: Yeah, I think so. I think so. You know, some of the changes that we talked about yesterday, I think those are important changes. But those things, you have to be vigilant, and I don't know what it is today. But the same kind of slipshod way of handling promotions and tenure could easily creep back into the system where they say, "You scratch my back, I'll scratch your back. You take care of my promotion this year, next year I'll vote for your promotion." Because that was clearly going on, not in every case, because most of the actions were proper and justified. But in the margin you had these guys that got taken care of, let's say. So we did that with a great deal of pain and effort, but if they hadn't kept it up, you lose that. But at least when I left it was in place.

And I did—coming back to the other question also—try to separate politics and politicians from the university. You know, the university was known as the dumping grounds for ex-politicians. And I think that that was true. When I was president, we didn't hire anyone on that basis because somebody—some politician who lost an election or somebody who's looking for his high three [retirement benefits], or whatever—we never did that. I did have several direct requests and I just didn't do it. And you know those things cost you something, I guess in politics. So I think that is very important that we want the people of the state to have confidence that the university is run in a way that's in the best interest of their kids. That it's not a matter of who you know whether you get into the university or (get a job at the university).

But I think the university cannot just sit back and criticize the politicians. It's their nature. That's how they get elected. We have to be strong to say no. So I hope that, I think that in Al Simone's case—I shouldn't say this, maybe you shouldn't print it—he did hire some politicians, he was active in politics. And (that was) a fundamental difference between me and Al, in addition to the style, is the university's [role] in politics, local politics. I firmly believe that there should be a separation. And Al, I think, firmly believed that there should be an

integration. And, you know, who knows who's right? He got more money [from the state for the university] than I did.

(Laughter)

FM: But also, I had a tightwad governor to work with.

(Laughter)

FM: You know, Ariyoshi's the guy that left \$400 million in the bank [i.e., state surplus]. And Waihee's the one that spent it, so it's a difference in style. And Waihee, I'm sure, would argue that there was a lot of public good (from the) expenditure of the funds. But to me that's the most important difference between Al and me. Not so much that he was more adventuresome, et cetera—he loved sports, I didn't. . . .

(Laughter)

FM: I mean, I enjoyed it, but I wouldn't think of throwing out the first ball [at a University of Hawai'i baseball game].

(Laughter)

FM: Or, worse still, going out there and pitching a game, but he loved that.

WN: Well, let's talk about you now. Did you leave the office of the president a different person from when you started?

FM: Yes, I learned a lot. I do in every job. I met a lot of people. So it was a very rewarding experience. You know, I've been very fortunate in my life. I've done a number of things. I've met a lot of good people, learned a lot from them. So the university certainly is one of the highlights of my career. I learned in basically everything I did. Of course when you're in school you learn a lot. When I did research at MIT and Illinois I learned from that. Met a lot of good people.

In basically everything that I've been privileged to do, I was able to get involved in more than just the job itself. Living in the world of (government) for ten years was a real experience. And at the university, of course the university is, by its very nature, a national, international organization. The Department of Transportation had (somewhat) the same character, so I was introduced early on into international issues and working with international colleagues. And for the University of Hawai'i, that's very important, because you work with a different set of people. But just the exposure and knowing about different countries is important. And each one is different, university is quite different from transportation. You learn a lot. Hopefully you grew and contributed to the process. I had a lot of fun.

WN: In a perverse way.

(Laughter)

FM: No, no, there were real moments of joy and satisfaction. Made a lot of good friends. So, good

experience. I recommend it.

(Laughter)

WN: Well, I'll apply maybe. Going back to your days in Kaka'ako, growing up, what values do you think you took with you from Kaka'ako all the way to your job as president?

FM: I guess the old-fashioned values of what my parents taught me. Basically, honesty and integrity. That's sort of made me what I am. I believe in those things. Hard work. A belief that people—you know there are always exceptions—people basically are good. Each person wants to have self-respect and wants to accomplish things. So, it doesn't matter who you're dealing with, the human characteristics are universal. So you treat each person, whether he's the president of another university or he's a janitor in that university. Each person has his or her worth, and what each one does is important.

So, in that respect, I have some problems—or had some problems—with some people (chuckles) whose sense of self-importance (caused them to) look down at other people. And I have a lot of problems with that. I guess I may have told you somewhere along that people's position or rank doesn't impress me. I look at a president of a large company, and I know people who run \$20-[billion]-, \$30-[billion]-, \$40-billion-a-year businesses, but that doesn't impress me. But what kind of person he is, does.

And I invariably find that the people who rise to these very important, responsible positions have the character and integrity and other (characteristics) that I (admire). But on the other hand, you find people like that in other walks of life as well, that also impress me. I've also found people who are rich, who are very superficial, who I wouldn't choose as a friend. I think that's all part of my Kaka'ako upbringing. Because we had a lot of different people there, and they were almost universally poor, you really get to examine people for what they are, not what they have or not what their fathers had.

WN: I think that's a good place to end.

MK: That's good, yeah.

FM: Okay.

WN: Thank you very much.

MK: Thank you.

FM: Oh, you're welcome, I enjoyed it.

END OF INTERVIEW

PRESIDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I

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